

THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER.

No. CVII.]

NOVEMBER, 1853.

[VOL. IX.]

FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.*

A Christian Church should be another name for freedom,—the freedom of intellectual and moral truthfulness, inspired by a high sense of religion. Discipleship to Christ was designed by the great Teacher to be the reverse of thralldom. “If ye continue in my word,” he said to half-persuaded Jews, “then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,”—free from the commission and servitude of sin, he adds, when they revolt at the insinuation that they, the children of Abraham, are otherwise than free already. Discipleship,—knowledge,—freedom from sin;—such is the divinely-appointed order of emancipation in Christ. And a Christian Church, to be truly worthy of its high function, must not abridge these fair proportions in any direction. Discipleship must open the door to knowledge as a boundless, never-exhausted field,

* Free Inquiry the Great Duty of Man; a Discourse preached on resigning his Charge over the Congregational Church, Kentish Town, by W. Forster. Freeman, 69, Fleet Street.

In course of publication, Discourses on Difficult Texts and Texts Misunderstood (preached at the Free Christian Church, Hawley Crescent, Camden Town), by the Rev. W. Forster:

The Mission of Jesus—God’s Merciful Presence and Power with Men. (Published September 3.)

The Indwelling Word—the Source of Christ’s Power, but not a Part of Himself. (Published September 10.)

The Knowledge of Jesus—derived from Heaven, to be imparted to Men. (Published September 17.)

The Son of Man—in Years though Young, in Official Designation older than Abraham. (Published September 24.)

The Death of Christ—its Grand Design the Purification of Souls, not Punishment for Sins.

Jesus, on Earth, in the Form of God and in Fashion as a Man—the Fact no Mystery, a Real Condescension, and a True Example.

The Exaltation of Christ—the Reward of Obedience, the Admiration of Men, and the Glorification of God.

“The Three Heavenly Witnesses,” or “The Holy Trinity”—its Human Origin, its Disastrous Influence, and its Certain Fall.

Moses in the Law and Christ in the Gospel—the Successive Schoolmasters of Mankind.

The Holy Spirit—the Meaning of the Term, the Nature of the Influence, and the Result of its Reception in Faithful Souls.

Christ under God—the Founder of Spiritual Society, not the Creator of Matter and Mind.

The Kingdom of Christ—its Origin, its Triumph, and its End, when the Son will be Subject and God be Supreme.

where the infinitude of the Divine works and ways supplies ever fresh material of thought and wonder, and the spirit of the Master gives motive, interest and help, in the all-animating pursuit; where Truth, the intellectual ideal at first, stands distant, yet not unapproachable, and as she is approached seems diviner in aspect and becomes more infinite in blessing to the moral and emotional parts of our nature, the claims of which this divine Truth alone can harmonize with those of the intellect. There is, indeed, nothing so large and comprehensive in the whole range of the world's philosophies, as the spirit of the gospel in the words and the life of its Founder. The notion of Truth, which systems of philosophy have often narrowed to comprise merely intellectual phenomena, is in Christianity connected, as it is in Human Nature, with emotion and conduct. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free from sin." Such is the freedom of the gospel;—the healthy development and virtuous activity of the mental and moral powers, under a profound sense of God in Christ. And such should be the spirit of every Christian Church.

Alas, that it has been and still is so far otherwise! According to the constitution and usages of most Churches, discipleship is the end, not the beginning, of progress in religious truth. Inquiry is foreclosed by their articles on entering; intellectual freedom is subscribed away thenceforth; and in place of that moral freedom which Christ offers through the harmonious action of the human faculties under the guidance of divine truth, the disciple is directed to seek emancipation, not from sin, but only from its penalties, by a sentimental imputation first, and then by an equally sentimental release, which the fearless spirit of Truth would pronounce impossible in human nature, and incredible as ascribed to the just and holy will of God.

A few Churches have been, in various ages and countries, honourably distinguished from the unevangelical servitude of the rest. In England, the days of political struggle for freedom gave self-government and the power of revising even their self-imposed confessions of faith, to the Independent and Baptist communions; while to the Presbyterians the varied experience of those days intrusted a yet more precious gift in advance, namely, the perception of the necessity of doctrinal differences and doctrinal progress. It is in the English Presbyterian Churches, accordingly, that the progress of religious thought and inquiry which has characterized the last century and a half, has principally gone on. They have experienced greater doctrinal changes, and exhibited at every step a greater diversity of opinion within their own borders, than any other denomination, and have been the open places of refuge for minds inspired with theological ardour or perplexed with theological doubts. A noble mission theirs to many true hearts, which must have been crushed by terror or hardened by excommunication elsewhere!

Less rapidly, but steadily and surely, the same process has taken place, and is now visibly going on, among the Independent and Baptist Churches, of providing for some diversity of opinion among their members, and for progress or change of opinion with the progress of time. Their written creed has been changed, and can be changed again. The now recognized formulary of the Independent (or Congregational) Churches, retains scarcely a shadow of the Assembly's Confession of Faith. Their best recent writers on scriptural criticism speak rationally about the inspiration of the records. Their best theologians have put forth very modified views of atonement. Eternal punishment has been relinquished for the more merciful scheme of annihilation, or mitigated into eternally diminished bliss. The Baptist Churches have been always less amenable to written creeds than the Independent, and their living creed has the more freely modified its own doctrines. The ministers of both denominations now receive the education of accomplished scholars and philosophers. The small proportion of their laymen who attain a correspondingly high intellectual culture, is the great difficulty still in the way of theological freedom and progress. The deacons, on occasions of dispute, still sit in judgment on the theology of the pulpit, and usually decide by the statute law of the creed or confession, rather than by the common law of Christian freedom and a large faith in the spirit of truth and progress. Yet the progress of free thought and inquiry, and of modified doctrine in consequence, is rapidly going on in these two denominations. To what kind of manifestation it may lead in the course of time, it may be difficult to anticipate. But beyond all doubt, a great change for the better is going on in the minds of thoughtful men in the Congregational and Baptist Churches, the natural and necessary result of advancing education, intelligence and activity of thought on all subjects,—some of the most palpable signs of which are at present shewn by the formation of “Free Christian Churches.”

By *Free Christian Churches* is meant what in Ireland is denoted by the term *Non-subscribing*, each term being designed to intimate the absence of tests or creeds, while each term is awkwardly subject to the *equivoque* of what the Church of England means by a Free Church, namely, one endowed for gratuitous use by the poor. The Churches theologically free are self-sustaining alike in temporal and spiritual resources.

The Christian Reformer has watched and duly chronicled various movements of this kind with earnest sympathy. Not with sectarian triumph, but as simple matter of fact, we have hailed such societies as attaining our own happy position of free thought and Christian comprehensiveness of feeling. We have seen them, “at a great price” of moral heroism, winning to themselves the glorious liberty to which we were “free-born,” and have heartily wished them God-speed. We have not minutely canvassed their

existing doctrinal conclusions, feeling that the great principles of human and Christian right which they and we share together, and from which we derive our own theological results, may possibly give to other minds different doctrinal results, and that, in any case, the essential thing for them and for us is, to be spiritually free. To them, as to us, there is no longer an *orthodoxy* to desire, or a *heterodoxy* to fear. The confusion of mind and distress of heart which come from being taught that spiritual blessedness depends not upon the mind's moral truthfulness, but upon the abstract truth of its conclusions, is for ever henceforth spared them; and they and we can be equally *of the truth*, though of differing opinions. They have thrown away "*orthodoxy*," with its seductive *prestige* and its withering curse, personal and social. It is only with that horrid thing *orthodoxy* that we quarrel; and this for the sake of human honour and Christian love. Trinitarianism, if it can still be held apart from the presumptuous claims of orthodoxy, is to us, Unitarians as we are, morally inoffensive, though we, of course, deem it theologically false. But, in point of fact, every Church that has been formed on these principles of spiritual freedom, has consisted altogether of persons holding very *liberal* views of theology; and, though not called *Unitarian*, or founded (any more than our own Churches are) upon any formal confession of Unitarian theology, their mode of worship in all cases is *characteristically Non-trinitarian*, or, in other words, virtually Unitarian. In some, there may be a less free discussion and avowal of religious opinions than our Presbyterian forefathers and ourselves have successively exhibited; and we have avowed our conviction that a *Free Church* is not really free if made the cover for vagueness or compromise of religious opinion on the part of the minister, whose duty is freely to declare his convictions of scriptural truth, to study diligently the explanation of all hard things in the Scriptures, and in his preaching and expositions faithfully to present these results of his learning and leisure to his people's thought and reflection, while conducting a mode of worship which shall imply as little specialty of sectarian doctrine as possible, it being, in other words, simply offered to the Heavenly Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have, consistently with this perfect appreciation of the freedom of all Free Churches, been a little jealous of some such avowed movements, when they have seemed to cast an undeserved and most unhandsome slur upon the freedom of those very Churches whose principles and spirit they can only imitate. No Unitarian, minister or layman, need leave his present associates in search of liberty at any rate. Whatever else he may need, it is certainly not freedom of thought or freedom of speech that he has to go in quest of. There is no man intrusted with such unbridled liberty of speech and action as a Unitarian minister in this country. It is bounded only by the limits of good

principle and of good taste, in regard to which latter he must err palpably before any one will find fault with him. As to the Unitarian layman, what shackles can he find upon his limbs or speech or intellect? Did he ever yet recognize his minister as his priest or father-confessor? Has he ever feared to discuss, behind his back or to his face, the doctrines, theological, metaphysical, social, political, propounded by him in the pulpit or out of it? Has he ever scrupled to talk as he thinks and act as he believes right, for fear of clerical censure, anathema or excommunication? The idea is absurd. The Unitarians have no spiritual church government at all. Some may think our constitution too free; but no one can find more freedom, at any rate, go where he may. From thorough freedom he cannot retreat to any thing freer. Our religious constitution, in fact, consists simply in the living bond of similarity of religious views and feelings; and its expression is our voluntary union in that broad form of Christian worship which the newer "Free Churches" imitate and adopt from us. We will not endure, then, to be told of Unitarians seeking freedom elsewhere. They may seek sentiment of another order; they may seek excitement of a different or more powerful kind; they may seek music, oratory, poetry; they may seek to gratify personal taste or preference as regards the preacher and all that is personal to him; but they will find no higher liberty than that by virtue of which they leave the old Unitarian Chapel for the new Free Church,—none presuming to question their act as matter of right or of taste, if they would not at parting commit the folly and indecency of casting a slur upon the liberty of those who have trained them to their own boasted freedom.

Mr. Forster's Free Church at Kentish Town has our intire and warm sympathy. It is no cloak for obscurity of opinion. It does not pretend to unite Trinitarians and Unitarians in one form of worship. He is an avowed Unitarian Christian. He is come out from free to freer, at the dictate of a high sense of scrupulous honour, when he might have retained a position of great influence and usefulness among the most liberal section of the Congregationalists, had his views of Christian doctrine been less decided or less far in advance of those held by the body of his hearers. Legally, he might have held his place notwithstanding; but a high sense of honour forbade. We gave in a former number of the C. R. (p. 460) an account of Mr. F.'s resignation. It must have been no slight trial to leave a splendid Gothic Church, with its beautiful stained glass windows "casting their dim religious light," the monument of his own successful ministrations,—and to leave also the majority of those among whom he has successfully ministered,—for a carpenter's shop (suggestive, indeed, of the literal history of the origin of the gospel), where, amid the zeal of his intelligent and inquiring adherents, a new struggle has to be sustained against outward difficulties, aggra-

vated and embittered by orthodox efforts to throw odium upon their noble enterprise. Honour to this good man and to his faithful band of believers! for theirs is indeed belief worthy of the name,—belief in the supremacy of conscience, and the sufficiency of God's own light in the soul. Old friends may look coldly on them in the name of orthodoxy; but their own regard for old friendships is not chilled by their new religious views, however tried by the treatment they receive,—a contrast which must endear the more to them the beneficent spirit of their "Free Church." But Mr. Forster must be allowed to tell his own story, which he does with unaffected simplicity and manly straightforwardness at the end of his farewell discourse, as follows:

"I would fain have finished this discourse without saying one word about myself. This seems to be impossible. The occasion requires a short statement of the cause which has led to the resignation of my charge. Five years ago I saw reason to give up some of the leading doctrines of Calvinism. This investigation, which led me to abandon unconditional election, the final perseverance of the saints, and the special influence of the Holy Spirit, shattered fearfully the whole system of opinions in which I had been educated, and which I had hitherto faithfully upheld. You also adopted my new views. We became an Arminian church. Of this we made no secret. This edifice was erected for the teaching of anti-Calvinistic opinions. This is provided for by express clauses in the trust-deed. My views of the Trinity became also gradually modified; and in drawing up the creed for the trust-deed, I mentioned to the deacon my objections to employ in the creed of a progressive church like ours the old terms used to describe God. He concurred. I was very minute in giving my reasons. It was agreed that all definition of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit should be avoided, and that the clause—'This place is erected for the worship of God as the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit,' should be placed at the head of the creed. To this you consented by passing it unanimously in church-meeting assembled. Through growing doubts on the subject I resolved eight months ago to look into the whole question of the Trinity. That inquiry has been gone through; and the result you know. I now give up this pulpit (which I could have legally retained), because I am resolved, whatever may be the consequences, not to take advantage of a creed drawn up by myself for the express purpose of leaving the church and future pastors unfettered upon a subject which has perplexed the wisest and best of men. A few weeks ago this edifice was put in trust by myself and the two other lessees of the ground. I made not the slightest objection to do this, though I might have refused. Under that deed you were not a church until you received your certificate of membership from your pastor. With that document you were supplied on the very evening you met to receive my notice of resignation.

"I mention these things to remind you how spontaneous was my retirement; how entirely you are indebted to my strict sense of duty for the quiet possession of this building, and for your enfranchisement as a Christian community. I would not have given this detailed account had I not heard that the reasons for the relinquishment of my pulpit

have been grossly and wilfully misrepresented. I have done what all just and impartial men, I think, must approve. And now I must bid you farewell. It would be affectation in me if I were to pretend that it was not a great trial to leave this pulpit. This beautiful church was erected through God's blessing upon my labours. Seven years ago you were few, divided, and depressed. There had been, up to that time, for years, wealth, piety, and prayers, striving to keep up the 'cause,' but it gradually sank into the lowest condition of distraction and weakness. I need not dwell on the efforts I put forth to overcome the apparently insuperable difficulties of this position. With what success I leave you to judge. During the period of my pastorate I have lived among you like a friend and brother, not as a priest and ruler. I have been with you in weddings, baptisms, sicknesses, losses, deaths, and burials. I have never craved the luxuries of your tables; the gaieties of your social circles; the recreations of your leisure hours. The sick, the sorrowful, the bereaved, and the dying, have had a larger share of my attention than the wealthy, the tranquil, and the happy. I have sought to inculcate in the minds of your children sound principles; to give them clear views of truth; and to convince them that religion is to make men wise, cheerful, good, virtuous, benevolent, and happy. I have not been severe to the failings of the poor, and winked at the faults of the rich. The richest among you can bear testimony to the truth of this statement. I have kept back no truth because it was unpalatable and unpopular. I have brought such truth forward, though I knew it would bring down upon me the displeasure of such as have the peace of a Dissenting minister in their power. In the government of this church I have never sought to lord it over any man's faith or opinions; I have freely conceded to all their just rights, and respectfully asserted my own. Fondly did I hope, as I saw these walls rising, that I should have ended my days among the people who were to be collected within them, for the worship of God. The Disposer of all events has seen fit to order it otherwise. Be it so. It is not proper that this cup of bitterness should pass away untasted. It might have been avoided I know. But then, sincerity, truth, honour, self-respect, would have been sacrificed. This could not be.

"In taking leave of you, I feel this to be a solemn moment. The eye of the All-seeing is upon us. The judgment-seat rises before my view. In reviewing the labours of seven years among you, though not unconscious of many defects, I am grateful to Him whom I have served in the gospel of his Son, that I can, in his awful presence, as well as before you all, appeal to your consciences, in the language of the great apostle, 'I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.' Let me urge you again, and for the last time, to 'prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good.' 'And may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.'"

We must also give the tender and touching introduction :

"When a man has anything to do for the last time—something in the doing of which he has always taken great pleasure—he is certain

to be the subject of solemn and sorrowful feelings. He will naturally wish to do it better than he had ever done before, and yet, from unavoidable anxiety and excitement, he is almost sure to fall short of his aim. If it were the last opportunity of speaking to an individual for his good, how careful would he be in the selection of the topic of discourse, in the arrangement of his thoughts, in the ordering of his words, in the expression of his emotions, lest the effort should fail through personal feebleness or folly. How great, for instance, would be the solicitude of a venerable father, who, from a dying pillow, had to take a final farewell of his children. Passing by subjects of minor interest, how would he point out their duty to God, their fraternal conduct to each other, and the principles which should regulate their lives in all their transactions with their fellow-men! How he would lay hold of that view of each subject most likely to affect their minds, rouse their consciences, and guide their steps in the path of piety and virtue! How he would strive to make it plain to the dullest, attractive to the most careless, and touching to the most callous of the family circle! How he would enforce his advice with all the affection which long years had garnered up in his heart, with all the strength which he could gather together in the article of death, and with all the solemnity which an overshadowing eternity could give to his last words! If even a most inveterate foe were present to whom his death would be a sort of relief and gratification, yet, in such an awful hour, it would be difficult for malignity itself to turn his emotions of tenderness into ridicule, to treat his dying advice with contempt, or to attribute this last attempt to benefit beloved survivors to any but self-forgetting and benevolent intentions. Not very unlike this situation is that of the faithful pastor who has to address his people for the last time. How searching are the self-questionings in prospect of this painful leave-taking! What topic shall be chosen for the occasion? What arguments shall he use to give it logical force over their understandings? In what way shall he best obtain for it a lodgment in their consciences? In what words of transparency and wisdom shall he clothe his thoughts? Such are some of the inquiries which present themselves to his mind. Great is the occasion, weighty the duty, severe the demand upon his powers. Still his feelings are so solemn and so sad as to depress or debilitate his energies, and unfit him for the duties of the situation. Such is the case with him who is now addressing his flock for the last time. I might have taken a topic for this occasion which would have thrown us back amid the peaceful and pleasing scenes of the past. This would have given room for the play of imagination, for gushes of friendly feeling, for appeal to the sympathies of kindly natures. This would not answer the design of the preacher. I have chosen a subject calculated to do you lasting good; such a subject as I would have chosen if, at the close of this service, I had to stand at the foot of the Eternal tribunal; a subject suited for all, young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned; a subject for the present age, for all ages to come; a subject which must be understood and reduced to practice by all Englishmen before they can advance much farther in the path of improvement marked out for them in the divine map of their onward course, or discharge the duties which Providence has imposed upon them to take the leadership of the nations in endeavouring to realize the highest

forms of freedom; to bring about the true solidarity of all peoples, and to abolish for ever the tyrannies which, like an incubus, have lain upon the huge and heaving breast of humanity for thousands of years. You will find this topic contained in the familiar, but much-unheeded, advice of Paul to the Thessalonians, in his 1st Epistle to the Christians bearing that name, the 5th chapter, 21st verse—"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."

The discourse which was thus begun and concluded, is a thorough-going and powerful exposition of the duty of Free Inquiry. The non-responsibility of man for his belief is avowed and explained at once, in words which recal to mind the unexplained and random assertion of the same great principle by Lord Brougham many years ago, in his well-remembered Inaugural Discourse as Lord Rector of the Glasgow University. Man is not responsible for his belief to his fellow-man; and even to God he is responsible not for the intellectual truth of the result, but for the moral truthfulness of the process. The former limitation Mr. Forster lays down in the outset; the latter great principle he illustrates throughout his discourse. Had the statesman been as accurate in his terms as this preacher, he would perhaps have precluded the equally inaccurate counter statement of responsibility which he provoked from another divine at the time we have referred to. But the statesman was understood at the time to deny all moral responsibility as attaching to the formation of opinions; while the orthodox divine, Dr. Wardlaw, in his turn asserted a responsibility which the "tender mercies of Calvinism" alone can contemplate without shuddering. Let us hear Mr. Forster, who makes all clear by a careful statement:

"We must get it wrought into our minds that we have no more *right to quarrel* with a man on account of his religious opinions than for the colour of his skin or the play of his lungs. He is no more accountable *to us* for the one than the other. To each of us the exhortation is addressed. 'Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.' It is a duty we owe to God, to truth, to ourselves, and to our race. To this theme I have now to direct attention."

Lord Brougham did not use the words we have marked with emphasis, nor did Dr. Wardlaw take the distinction which he had overlooked. We must quote intire the first head of the discourse, shewing the *duty* of assaying and testing "all things which come seeking a place in the understanding, heart and conscience:"

"IT IS EVERY MAN'S DUTY TO DO THIS, *because his mind is endowed with faculties to search after truth.*

"Intellectual and moral freedom is the birthright of every man. From his Creator he has received a power over the members of his body, the faculties of his mind, the affections of his heart, and the volitions of his will. In this prerogative is found the peculiarity of humanity, the basis of responsibility, the fount of moral life, the starting-point of all progress, and the principle of the highest excellence. For the exercise of his

powers and susceptibilities, of his freedom and ability, he is answerable to his Maker. With this condition he is at liberty to put them to whatever use is most agreeable to the impulse of his passions, or the dictates of his duty. No force can interpose to prevent or impel him. He may do as he likes. What he sows, however, he must reap. He cannot escape this law. The consequences of the right or wrong use of his talents are fixed as the immutable effects of physical causes. In the foresight of these he finds the strongest motives to proceed with care. Of all his endowments, this faculty of discovering truth is the most important. It belongs to every man. It is distinctive of his nature. It is placed under his control. It must be voluntarily employed. Its highest exercise is in the investigation of those facts which involve his spiritual well-being. He has been created capable of sitting as umpire over the conflicting claims of real and pretended revelations from God. He can perceive what is true and what is false in all religious communications. He can judge or taste what is genuine or what is spurious. His mental perceptions and moral sentiments are given him for this function. He must do it for himself. It cannot be done for him by another, as can the erection of his house, the manufacture of his clothes, or the dressing of his dinner. There are no minds specially endowed and anointed for this work. However low a man's powers of discernment may be, yet there is always enough strength in them to lay hold of some truth. If he faithfully use what he can thus acquire, it will diffuse a light and impart a purity which will qualify and dispose him for the acquisition of more, and still more, in pauseless and indefinite progression. To this divinely-instituted tribunal in every man the old prophets, Christ, and the apostles appealed, yea, God himself appeals, for he spoke through them,—and upon its faithful decision he rests the reception of those doctrines by which he designs to shew men the evil of sin, to bring them to repentance, to reconcile them to himself, to cultivate their spiritual natures in piety, holiness, righteousness, virtue, goodness, and worship. The Divine Being has so constituted the human soul that he knows whatever truth is in the Bible will obtain a place in the intellectual and moral nature of man, if he is faithful to his faculties. God has sent the truth he would have man receive to the judgment-seat of reason and conscience to investigate its claims. He does not enter the court where they carry on their inquiry to overawe by his greatness, to terrify by threats, or corrupt by bribes. As man discharges the functions imposed on him he increases in capability for this duty. 'His love of what is good abounds more and more in all knowledge and judgment, or sense, so that he can try things which differ,' and thus 'by reason of use, or habit, he has his sense exercised to discern good and evil.' It is from the truth itself acting on the intellect which God has given him that he gains this godlike power. Having sat in judgment on the contents of the Bible, he is able to try all human creeds and dogmas by the standard raised in his own mind. The objective truths of revelation become subjective in his thoughts, feelings, and principles. He becomes wiser than his teachers. Whatever help he gets from God or men, the final decision rests with himself. There is no more thanks to him for this awful power than for the peculiar configuration of his body. He is born a judge of divine things. The faculty which makes him so is the birthday present of his Creator. He cannot get at truth as such

but in this capacity. God has laid before him the subjects on which he is to decide. He holds him responsible, not for the judgments he may pronounce, but for the fidelity with which he cultivates his powers and weighs the evidence submitted to his investigation. He has no right to suspend their operation. He cannot transfer the office of judging to another without great culpability and detriment. Neither God nor man, Christ nor apostle, pope nor priest, pastor nor parent, can relieve him of this burden. He must bear it alone. To 'prove all things' is not only a sacred right, a high dignity, a vast utility, but a solemn necessity, an imperative duty, an unchangeable law. He is bound to resist any attempt, however plausibly or violently made, to rob him of his right or relieve him of his duty. It is the boast of Protestantism that it respects this right and urges this duty. On its proud banner is seen flashing in the sunbeam and the breeze the well-known motto, 'The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.' The statement contains a profound truth; but what a falsehood is it often in the mouths of those who most vociferously proclaim it. How little have the contents of the Bible to do with men's personal belief. How seldom are men taught to rely on their own powers in the investigation of the truth. How few are the Christians who sit at the feet of Jesus or frequent the apostolic college. If Dissenters have renounced the infallibility of the Pope, have they not bowed their necks to a yoke almost as heavy and galling? If they have given up the Thirty-nine Articles, have they on that account conceded to each other the right of judging all things for themselves? If the Trentine pandects are not retained as the law of their religious faith and life, are they not bound by the institutes of Calvin, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Assembly's Catechism, the Minutes of Conference, and the Sermons of Wesley; the creeds of chapel trust-deeds, the Congregational Union Confession of Faith, or by the writings of Howe, Watts, Doddridge, Gill, Fuller, Hall, Priestley, Watson, Channing, and of other great men, who ought to be dear to their hearts, but not lords of their faith? Are we not all of us more or less guilty of this servility? Have we not yet to learn that there is no *via media*, no middle way between Reason and Rome? There is, unhappily, floating over us an invisible and unexpressed opinion, to which all, in the main, must agree. It hovers over the pulpit and the pew; over the church and congregation; over the professor's chair and the student's form; over the family and the school; over the Bible and the commentary. All thought, all sentiment, all investigation, all conclusions, all teachings, are controlled by it. It is this which checks free inquiry, shuts the mouths of those who have convictions which fit not the Procrustes' bed according to which all opinions are to be shortened or stretched; makes hypocrites of those who cannot afford to keep a conscience, or have not courage to brave the consequences of honesty; turns the pulpit too often into the chair of restraint, concealment or compromise. Wherever this tyranny is obeyed, there cannot be much depth of conviction, vitality of sentiment, growth of knowledge, and improvement of religious life. If this principle were applied to science it would paralyze all the energies of investigation, and make the wheels of progress stand still. If churches will not respect individual liberty, will not let their ministers and members investigate the Scriptures, and theology, the fruit of other men's examination of

the Scriptures, as fearlessly, impartially, and rigidly as men inquire into Nature and the human results of searching into Nature, such as astronomy, chemistry, and any other branch of science, then it is the duty of every Christian, in God's name and the name of human nature, to resist the imposition. It may cost him friends, income, reputation, station, and much which he highly values. He is bound, at whatever sacrifice, to maintain his inborn and inalienable freedom. In this way the yoke of the creeds would be broken. The churches would be turned into the seats of liberty. A noble, manly piety would grow up among us. The truth, whatever it is, would be discovered. A new state of things would be instituted. Every man would be respected as he rejected human authority over his conscience, refused to allow uninspired men to make his creed as his furniture, his bread, or books, tested all opinions by the light of his own reason, chose to give an account of his convictions, or the use of his powers in obtaining his convictions, to none but his Maker. Self-respect, love of truth, reverence to God, benevolence to men, call upon us all to stand by our native right and duty of searching into all truth, contained in all creeds, confessions of faith, catechisms, and all other documents, whether human or divine. The obligation lies in our power of searching into whatever concerns our moral culture, spiritual life, and religious duty."

The preacher next considers "the reward which will follow the discharge of this duty" (it consists in gaining "what is good"); and then he goes on to ask, "what we are to do with the good and beautiful when we have got it." He replies, we are to hold it fast; *by nourishing and strengthening our spiritual natures with it; by cultivating the spirit and keeping up the habit of fearless and careful inquiry, and by making faithful use of it for the good of others.*

"Our souls require to be fed as much as our bodies. Man cannot live by bread alone. If he had only a mere animal nature, then he would need no higher food. We crave for something which riches cannot buy. It is the want of suitable aliment for the soul which makes man restless and dissatisfied. In the distraction of his thoughts he is ever crying, 'Who will show me any good?' The worldling, the sensualist, the philosopher, the priest, offer to take him by the hand and to lead him to the fountains of pleasure for which he thirsts. They all disappoint him. He wants that which they cannot give. He needs the good which can be obtained only by the exercise of his own powers on God's truth. It is this which will nourish his soul, allay its desires, fill it with peace, make it strong, holy, beautiful and active. He must, by spiritual assimilation, turn the food which he finds in the truth into part of himself. In this way he garners it up where moth cannot corrupt it, and thieves cannot break through and carry it away. It is transubstantiated into the thoughts, the feelings, the principles, the affections, the habits, the whole inner life, of his spirit. Wherever he is, there is his treasure. It is with him at home and abroad, in the city and the field, in the crowded thoroughfares of men and along the quiet way-side; in society and solitude, in the occupations of business, and in the hours of recreation; in the mart of commerce and in the church of God. It has become

bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, spirit of his spirit. He cannot but hold it fast. If his religious views were contained in creeds which had been providently drawn up for him, or if they were expressed in the books of some favourite author, or if they were held by the community to which he belonged; if they have no place in his views of right and wrong, in his convictions, his affections, his principles, his motives, his prevalent volitions, his daily doings; if they do not make up the vital elements of his inner life, do not lie at the bottom of all that he is, are not involved in all his thoughts, feelings and conduct; then he may part with them as easily as with an estate, a garment, or a house. They are to be bought. He would give them for love of reward or the fear of loss. To hold fast that which is good, we must have it laid up in our own spiritual and everlasting natures. It is sure to be secure there. Reason, conscience, love, hope, fear—all that is strong and invincible to mere force—will keep it in safe custody. Fire, fetters, dungeons, hunger, tortures, death, could not force it out of the soul. Promises, rewards, favours, riches, ease, rank, applause, will not tempt to give it up."

The principal HINDRANCES WHICH PREVENT MANY FROM OBEYING THE APOSTOLIC INJUNCTION, are briefly, but truly and fearlessly stated to be—*a deference to antiquity, the power of numbers, the influence of education, mental indolence, and regard for secular interests.*

"Such are some of the hindrances which prevent men from inquiring freely into the truth which concerns their highest well-being. How generally their force has been felt and allowed! But few in any age have had strength of purpose enough to overcome them. They must, however, be universally vanquished before mankind can shake off the shackles of the most ignoble restraint, strike away into the path of eternal excellence, follow the guidance of the fire-pillar of truth which conducts to the region of eternal day, and rejoice in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. To inspire men with this mental freedom should be the aim and tendency of all preaching, all education, all example, all institutions. When it is obtained, knowledge, righteousness, virtue and happiness will take up their pure, serene and happy home among the sons of men."

The duty advocated in this noble discourse, his last in the Gothic Church, Mr. Forster is illustrating week by week in a work-shop, by a series of well-chosen subjects connected with "difficult texts and texts misunderstood" (of which we have given the titles at the beginning of this article), and each discourse is published at a cheap rate as soon as possible afterwards. We rejoice to know that these lectures are attracting great attention. The room (a large one) is inconveniently filled with intelligent and inquiring people, a large proportion of whom are *men*, manifesting their evident sympathy with the masculine reasoning and gravity of the religious views there propounded. Their numbers increase rapidly, and their zeal and faith grow stronger continually. Orthodox zeal is roused to the distribution of tracts specially pointed against the new society, and the rising spirit of controversy is hailed by them as sure to produce good results.

The London Unitarians have, individually and collectively, given them hearty sympathy and co-operation; and steps are in progress for raising the means of building a suitable place of worship.

Who shall tell us that the Unitarian controversy is over? Why it is new at this day to all the zealots in Kentish Town, who have to learn its very elements at the suggestion of this strange event that has just happened in their neighbourhood. And it will not be over till Orthodoxy is everywhere relinquished, and Trinitarianism sabellianized at least. A long time to look forward to! A long time for such labourers as Mr. Forster to persevere! Of his discourses now in process of delivery and publication we may probably find occasion to speak when the series is complete. At present we observe, that they are precisely the order of topics calculated to bring into view the positive advantage of the Unitarian over the Trinitarian theology; and not only to solve the scriptural difficulties alleged by orthodoxy against the former, but to throw the burden (where it really lies) in accumulated weight upon the latter.

The lectures are popular, but not superficial. In a note accompanying the first (on the Mission of Jesus), Mr. F. says,—

“It will be seen at once by the critic that these discourses are addressed *ad populum*, not *ad clerum*. They are intended to popularize certain religious views which have been generally represented to the people as unscriptural, rationalistic, injurious in the present life, and leading to eternal death. As the author believes them to be the identical views respecting God, Christ, and the means of redemption, taught by Jesus and promulgated by his apostles, he is persuaded the people will readily receive them, fully yield to their divine influence, and gladly walk in their heavenly light. He has chosen a series of texts which he admits to have their difficulties, but maintains to have been entirely misunderstood by the great body of Christians and their teachers. He will endeavour to show the perverted sense put upon them, to bring out as simply as possible their real meaning, and to point out their practical bearing on the spiritual life. Amply will he be repaid if his testimony contribute in the least degree to the spread of the pure, rational, quickening and sanctifying Christianity of Christ. He feels confident that the masses need only to be convinced that the prevailing opinions on theological subjects are perversions of the Word of God, have no real sanction from the discourses of Jesus and the writings of the apostles, in order to secure their honest and hearty consideration of the whole subject of Christianity. It is the absurdities of the Trinity, and the revolting doctrine of the satisfactionist theory, which cause them in their strong sense to reject a religion really designed to make them intelligent, virtuous, holy, free and happy. If they were only disabused of these erroneous but vulgar notions of the religion of the New Testament, they would cheerfully receive him as their teacher and guide, whom, when on earth, the ‘common people gladly heard.’ It is for the promotion of this great and most desirable end, that the author has consented to give publicity to discourses which were originally designed merely for his own congregation.”

How true is this explanation of the causes of popular unbelief! May Mr. Forster find access, through the interest excited by his peculiar circumstances, to readers as well as hearers inaccessible to ordinary Unitarian agencies, and help to spread the fact, so little known, that Christianity is a reasonable religion! We are struck with one beautiful characteristic of these lectures, which shews Mr. Forster's own deep sense of the blessedness of Christian Unitarianism,—namely, his frequent allusions to the Religion of Nature. God's works reflect the same attributes as His revealed word. The analogy of Natural Religion and Christianity is the delight of the Christian Unitarian to contemplate and illustrate. We conclude with one of many instances in which Mr. F. shews his evident delight in this divine reconciliation and harmony of things, so sadly set in opposition by the prevailing theology:

“WE HAVE NOW TO CONSIDER HOW THE MISSION OF JESUS IS THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF GOD WITH MEN.

“It is by giving them the help which they need, and which they could not obtain but by special interposition. It is extended to them by the hands of a Mediator. Is not all divine help mediatorial? Does not God help men through Nature? Is not *its* name, properly, Emmanuel, *God with us*? Why should it not be? Did not Abraham call the place where he received divine relief in a great strait, Jehovah-jireh, *the Lord will provide*? Will men ever view Nature aright until they regard it as the living and life-giving agency formed and employed by the Creator to nourish and gladden his creatures? He has put his own divine name into it. It is not only the Shekinah of his cheering presence, but the medium of his sustaining power. Nature, however, is not God, nor a part of God. Christianity is a fuller and higher application of the same principle. It is the spiritual help given to men through the medium of humanity. It is God helping us by a ‘man whom he ordained,’ and specially qualified for his work. Christ, however, is not God, though he is the image of God, and filled with all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. His nature is human, though his Messianic powers are divine. In a higher degree than Nature, he deserves to be called Emmanuel; because in him and through him God is with us to give us greater help.”

E. H. H.

HENRY MORE.

HIS Letters on Disinterested Piety, his boundless charity, his zeal for the utmost toleration, and his hope of a general improvement from “a pacific and perspicacious posterity,” place him high in the small number of true philosophers, who, in their estimate of men, value dispositions more than opinions, and in their search for good, more often look forward than backward.—*Sir James Mackintosh's Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. I. p. 96, note.

ON THE POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.

POETS, like the professors of the other imitative arts, besides aiming at moving our feelings and raising our thoughts by the more real beauties of their works, have usually been willing to give further pleasure by adding ornaments. Some of these in poetry form its versification, such as a fixed length of line, or syllables marked out by length and accent, or rhyme at the end of the line, or alliteration in the middle; by all of which, strength is added to the pauses and the memory is helped. Another ornament is an artificial diction, or a choice of words not used in every-day life. But the employment of ornament is dangerous; many a bad poet has given us common thoughts, ornamented with versification and artificial diction in the place of poetic beauties; and perhaps the safest way to reach excellence is to look with distrust upon all ornament as a snare. From this danger Hebrew poetry was remarkably free. Its rude, simple language had no words but those of the actions and feelings of every-day life. The only mark of its versification was for the most part in the sense, and very little in the sound. It was made by dividing each sentence into two or more parts, so that the latter clauses either repeated in new words, or answered, or in some way balanced, the first. This is called the parallelism of the clauses in Hebrew verse. As an example, we may take Job's praise of Wisdom:

“But where shall Wisdom be found;
And where is the place of Understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
The depth saith, It is not in me;
And the sea saith, It is not in me.
It cannot be gotten for gold;
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.”

(Job xxviii. 15.)

This mode of marking the verse by the arrangement of the thoughts, is seen as well in the English translation as in the Hebrew original. It is also seen in the Greek of the New Testament, when poetry is there introduced. In the beginning of Luke's Gospel, Mary says,—

“My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
He shewed strength in his arm;
He scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
He put down the mighty from thrones,
And raised up the lowly.
He filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich he sent away empty.”

Thus, since the Hebrew poetry received so little help from outward ornament, it was driven to rest its claims entirely on the

higher and truer merits of the art ; on its lofty thoughts, its depth of feeling, its bold and grand images. In these higher excellences it was not a little helped by the nature of its subject, which is usually devotional, and expresses a more earnest trust in the Almighty than is found in the poetry of nations who cultivate a divided worship. Even when smarting under their sufferings, the Jews never thought themselves forgotten by their God, or doubted his power to help them.

“Behold (says Isaiah) the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save ;

Neither his ear hardened that it cannot hear.” (Ch. lix. 1, 2.)

And the prophet Habakkuk beautifully says,—

“Although the fig-tree shall not blossom,
Neither shall fruit be in the vine ;
Though the labour of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no meat ;
Though the flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls ;
Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.” (Ch. iii. 17, 18.)

Equally beautiful is the melancholy tone with which the prophets speak of the nation’s sufferings :

“Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar ; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God ?” (Joel ii. 17.)

The change from narrative to a speech, from speaking of God to addressing him, is frequently very impressive. Thus :

“God hath spoken once ; yea, twice have I heard it,
That power belongeth unto God.
Likewise unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy ;
For thou renderest unto every man according to his work.”
(Ps. lxii. 11, 12.)

And again :

“O bless our God, ye people,
And make the voice of his praise to be heard.
He holdeth our souls in life,
And suffereth not our feet to stumble.
For thou, O God, hast proved us ;
Thou hast tried us as silver is tried.” (Ps. lxvi. 8, 9, 10.)

In many passages, earnestness and enthusiasm are a cause of sublimity far beyond what ornament produces ; as,

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm in my holy mountain ;
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble ;
For the day of the Lord cometh, it is nigh at hand.” (Joel ii. 1.)

And again, when the Psalmist says,—

“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning,
If I do not remember thee;
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”
(Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6.)

The similes are usually chosen from the most familiar objects ; as,

“My days are consumed like smoke ;
And my bones are burned like an hearth.
I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.”
(Ps. cii.)

The metaphors are of the boldest kind ; as, when the people are happy, “the mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs” (Ps. cxiv.). When the nation is alarmed, “the earth trembleth, and the hills smoke” (Ps. civ. 32). When the wicked reproach, “they sharpen their tongues like a sword, and shoot their words like arrows” (Ps. lxiv. 3).

No writings furnish us with finer instances of the sublime than the Old Testament. At the head of these stands the description of the creation of light in the Book of Genesis. It strikes us with its shortness and almost bluntness. The creation follows at once upon the Creator’s word. “And God said, Let there be light ; and there was light.” The first words raise our expectations, and those which follow fully satisfy them. The act is instantaneous, without mention of instruments or succession of events.

Another method of producing the sublime is by several grand images rising one over the other, so that at every pause the mind feels satisfied, and always rests with pleasure upon the last thought as being yet more striking than any that have gone before. Such is the prophet Nahum’s vision of the march of the army and storming of the city of Nineveh :

“Woe to the city of blood !
It is full of falsehood and robbery ; but the prey will not escape.
[Hark !] there is the sound of a whip, and the rattling of wheels.
There is a noise of prancing horses, and of jumbling war-chariots.
[Look !] the horseman lifteth up his bright sword and glittering spear.
There is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases.
There is no end of corpses ; they stumble over the dead bodies.”
(Chap. iii. 1.)

The reader is hurried along by the hurry of the battle, and his ears and eyes are both engaged in noting the advance of the Babylonian chariots and the slaughter of the Assyrians. Here the description rises from a state of quiet to noise and to dreadful action. But yet more grand are those pictures which, on the

other hand, rise from noise and action to rest and silence. Such is the history in prose of Jehovah speaking to Elijah at the Mount in Horeb, which teaches us the superiority of rest over action as a source of the sublime :

“And a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind.

“And after the wind came an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

“And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire.

“And after the fire a still small voice.

“And it was so that when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and came forth out of the cave.” (1 Kings xix.)

Perhaps no other instance can be given of a writer venturing so slowly and so boldly to raise our expectations, and then completely satisfying them. And if we would explain the sources of the sublime in poetry by those in either of the kindred arts, we may compare the creation of light to one of the huge simple pyramids of Memphis, without ornaments and without parts, before which we bow down in awe and wonder. The history of Elijah we may compare to one of the temples of Upper Egypt, where, after examining the massive roof, the strength of the walls and columns, and the size of the sculptured figures, we feel encouraged in our efforts to overcome difficulties, and even to aim at something great.

S. S.

FAITH AND DOUBT.

1.

SOME men have never believed enough to doubt.

2.

A sigh shall be given to the doubt of love, which is refused to the doubt of indifference.

3.

The belief *diabolical* ends in trembling; the belief Christian ends in doing.

4.

We may question the decisions of the intellect; but it is at our peril that we tamper with the verdict of the heart.

5.

To the priestly mind, candour seems the first step towards unbelief.

6.

You choose a guide amongst precipices and glaciers; but you *walk* yourself.

The Rev. F. W. ROBERTSON, late of Brighton.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED BY REV. J. J. TAYLER, B. A.,
PRINCIPAL OF MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, IN UNIVERSITY
HALL, FRIDAY, OCT. 14, 1853.

THE opening of the first session of Manchester New College, on its removal from the position which it has occupied for considerably more than half a century in the North of England, and its annexation, as a School of Theology and Religious Philosophy, to a national seat of Secular learning in the Metropolis, seems to afford a suitable opportunity for taking a brief review of the relation of our Institution to the general condition of learning and religion in this country, of the higher requirements and wider prospects which the diffused intelligence of the times brings to the Christian Ministry, and of the superior advantages for the training of men to that important office, and for acting with increased effect on the state of public opinion, which, it may be hoped, our Academy will enjoy, under the new circumstances to which it is now transferred.

For the information of those, if any, now present, who may be strangers to our religious denomination, and to rectify the misapprehensions so often prevalent among such as might be supposed to be better acquainted with it, I think it may be well to state at the outset the precise nature of the relation in which Manchester New College now stands to University College and University Hall.—Manchester New College, at its first establishment in 1786, in the city from which it takes its name, was intended to embrace in its course of Academic instruction, the education of both laymen and divines. On its transference to York in 1803, the same plan was pursued; and during the seven-and-thirty years of its continuance in that city, not only a large proportion of the ministers who now fill the most important pulpits in our denomination, but many also of our laymen who have since risen to stations of honour and influence in the country, received their education under the learned and excellent men who at that time conducted its studies and maintained its reputation. In 1840, it was brought back to Manchester, and the plan of combined instruction for laymen and divines was attempted anew. Success, however, did not correspond to expectation;—not from any lack of zeal or ability in the several distinguished men who had charge of its secular department, but because the superior attractions and advantages of University College naturally drew off from it the supply of lay students, and almost entirely superseded, as far as they were concerned, the necessity for a separate denominational institution. Some of the best friends, therefore, of the College came to the conclusion, that as our young divines and our young laymen might henceforth have access to an abundant supply of the best secular learning at a national source, our only need in future would be to provide

ourselves with the theological, and in some degree the philosophical, instruction which the central institution, by the terms of its foundation, was precluded from furnishing. The establishment of University Hall for the residence, the domestic discipline, and the private tuition of young men resorting to the classes of University College, strengthened this view of our true Academic interest, and pointed out the way in which it might be advantageously carried into effect. The direct and principal object of Manchester New College from this time forth, will be the education of men for the Christian ministry; but its connection with University Hall will afford its teachers the opportunity of regularly imparting to young laymen, during their course of Academic study, the religious and ethical instruction which is indispensable to the completeness of a liberal education, and which University College cannot supply. For divinity students, Manchester New College prescribes a course of six years. Of these, the three first will be devoted to literary and scientific studies in the classes of University College; during the continuance of which, the needful test of proficiency will be applied to those who have been confided to its care, by periodical examinations from time to time in the course of each session, conducted by its own officers—its own teachers supplying, wherever necessary, some branches of instruction which are required for matriculation and a degree. The three last years will be occupied exclusively with Theology and preparation for the Christian Ministry; and this part of the course will embrace the Criticism and Exegesis of the Scriptures, studied in the original languages—the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion—Ecclesiastical History, accompanied by select Patristical reading—Doctrinal and Practical Theology, including a view of Christian Ethics—and weekly exercises in Composition and Elocution. The Library of Manchester New College is deposited, and its class-rooms are assigned, in University Hall. Its students, even when not residents in the Hall, are enabled and encouraged to connect themselves closely with its discipline and partake of its influences.* Thus University Hall is the link which connects Manchester New College as a Theological Institute, with University College as a seat of Secular learning. The lay and divinity students who assemble for instruction and discipline within its walls, are each presided over and represented by their respective Principals, whose cordial union and co-operation must bring them more and more under the control and guidance of a common Academic system. I look forward with confidence to the uninterrupted continuance and deepening intimacy of that union and co-operation; and I anticipate the happiest effect on the future condition of our churches, from the intermingling of our young laymen and our destined ministers in the halls and

* Nearly all the Manchester New College students have already become non-resident members of University Hall.

class-rooms of their Alma Mater, and from the friendships contracted between them in the open-hearted years of youth, amidst the generous rivalries of an honourable ambition, and the still nobler sympathies of a common thirst for knowledge and an united pursuit of truth.

Our old Universities, in the spirit of their institutions and in their characteristic influence and tendency, represent the interests of the Church and the Aristocracy. As a fitting response to the new demands of a more advanced age, the plan of a National University in the Metropolis was conceived by a number of enlightened men in the earlier part of this century, for the special benefit of those classes, containing so much of the freedom and vigour of our national mind, who feel themselves excluded, on whatever grounds, from the ancient seats of English learning, and who, up to the time of the new foundation, had endeavoured to supply the want for the education of their ministers, and in some degree for that of their laymen, by the maintenance of small denominational Academies in different parts of the kingdom. The limited range of instruction corresponding to limited resources, and the narrow, sectarian spirit,—an unavoidable result of exclusive association,—which under the most favourable circumstances had been more or less inseparable from the old Non-conformist system, would be remedied, it was hoped, by the higher influences of a truly national institution, that might command the service of the most eminent learning and ability in every department of literature and science, and must soften down party prejudice by attracting to a common centre the youth of all religious persuasions, and engaging them in the joint prosecution of an ennobling intellectual culture. The University of London has abandoned its original design, and assumed a new relation to the various seminaries of the higher learning spread over the country. But University College, which inherits its position and represents its fundamental principle, is still aiming to accomplish the same important purpose, which the first conception of the University itself had chiefly in view. That it has not to the full extent realized the expectations which the earliest projection of a scheme so liberal and so comprehensive excited in many sanguine minds, must be imputed, I fear, in part to the comparative apathy and indifference of the very classes whose benefit was specially proposed in its foundation. There was one imperfection, it must be confessed, in the scheme; but it was an inevitable result of the conditions under which alone it could be honestly carried into execution, and of the divided state of religious opinion to which it had to be applied. The new institution could not, without breaking faith with some of the parties whose mental elevation it sought to promote, and whose conscientious scruples it had sworn to respect, make any direct provision for theological instruction, or even for those higher branches of philosophic discipline which involve in them

the elements of theological warfare. An ungenerous use was made of this deficiency, to the prejudice of the London University, and in the name of Religion—by many, who would far better have served religion by pointing out and facilitating, as they easily might, the means of its removal. If, acknowledging the want which the University, and subsequently the College, could not, from the nature of its constitution, itself supply—but grateful, nevertheless, for the full recognition of the noble principle which occasioned it—all who felt that religious culture was indispensable to the completeness of an Academic course, had only done, what the spirited founders of this Hall have done—opened class-rooms where instruction might be given, in accordance with their own principles, on those subjects which could not be brought within the prescribed range of studies in the national College,—they would have met the difficulty, not only in the sole way that was possible, but, more than that, in the very way which more effectually than any other would have attained the object so earnestly desired. Europe might then, for the first time, have rejoiced at the spectacle of a national seat of education, which was based on the principle of religious freedom and equality, where Catholic and Protestant, Churchman and Dissenter, Christian, Jew and Theist, Believer and Unbeliever, alike enjoyed unobstructed access to the fountains of secular learning—but which at the same time rendered full homage to the indestructible sentiment of religion, as it is variously conceived and appropriated by the human mind, in the encouragement which it gave to the most diversified schools of theological belief, to come and cluster round it on every side. A centre of University learning surrounded by these various opportunities of spiritual culture and theological instruction, would be only a fitting expression of the rich and manifold religious life which is a fruit of our English freedom; and to doubt that Christianity and the truest spirit of Religion would be benefited by such an arrangement, is to want all depth of faith, and to admit that our strongest convictions must lose their hold upon us, as soon as they are looked at from opposite points of view. For there is a common vitality at the root of all our different forms of Christian belief—there are seeds of imperishable truth common, as I believe, to every modification of genuine religious feeling—which it is strengthening to our own faith, to see brought out and presented under new aspects to the mind, by the able and conscientious expounders of various creeds. What earnest searcher after truth would not esteem it a privilege to have an opportunity now and then, during his Academic years, of hearing the strong points of the ancient faith of Christendom elucidated by such accomplished teachers as Möhler or a John Henry Newman—of knowing what can be said for the Anglican system by such men as Arnold, Conybeare or Hare—of weighing the arguments produced for a learned Unitarianism by a Kenrick

or a Norton—or of considering the plea for Orthodox Nonconformity as set forth by a Robert Hall or a Pye Smith? Who would not rejoice to be made acquainted with the moral and spiritual resources of Judaism by an enlightened Rabbi; or to learn how much could be brought out of simple Theism for the consolation and guidance of mankind, by any earnest and reverential asserter of its principles? In a seat of learning, circumstanced as I have now supposed, where sectarian bitterness would be tempered by the amenities of a high intellectual culture, and all the ascendant influences would promote a reverential toleration, any teacher, to whatever persuasion he might belong, who was eminent in his own department, would be sure to attract to his lectures occasionally, and for particular parts of his course, many hearers not denominationally connected with him, to whom he could not fail to impart new and wider views of religious truth. Such are some of the facilities and encouragements which, it has ever seemed to me, an Academic institution, based on the principles of University College, might offer for the more perfect cultivation of indispensable branches of learning, not embraced within the range of its own discipline, and of which I cannot but regret that the various bodies of religionists have not as yet made any adequate use. I look on the junction of our own Theological Institute with University College as a recurrence, after some hesitation and delay, to the true Academic policy, and a movement altogether in the right direction; and I believe that the adoption by other denominations of the same course, so as to nurse into strength and productiveness the central institution, and enable it to oppose an unquestioned reputation for thorough scholarship and accurate science to the admitted claims of the old Universities—would, by raising the character, promote the truest interest, of Nonconformity, as an important element in our national life, and best meet the requirements and coincide with the strongest present tendencies of the public mind.

If I interpret that mind aright, the age of rigid dogmatism, of narrow, hard sectarianism, is gone—and nothing can bring it back. The very struggles of its blinded adherents to keep it where it is, only accelerate the tendencies which are sweeping it to its final destruction. But if it is not to be followed by a period of heartless indifference and vague unbelief, there must be an union, such as a great centre of national learning naturally invites, among earnest and enlightened men of all persuasions, for placing the cultivation of theology on a wider and more liberal basis, that by free interchange of thought, and a candid recognition of whatever is beautiful and true in their respective systems, they may gradually prepare the way for the ascendancy of a larger, a more generous and a more catholic Christianity. Such a change is to be promoted, not by compromise and vacillation—not by surrendering our hereditary position, where we know it to be

strong, or giving up one doctrinal point which our forefathers have satisfactorily established—but by earnestly developing from our own point of view, the various links of spiritual affinity which connect us with the good and devout of other denominations, and striving honestly to pierce through the outward form and first aspect of doctrines, to the hidden kernel of essential truth which is so often to be found within them.

The religious life of England, as it shews itself at present in large outward manifestation, is mainly resolvable into two elements—that of our Protestant hierarchy, with its associated Universities, as modified at the Reformation, and that which subsists in the free life and varied action of our multitudinous Nonconformity. Its peculiarity results from the action and reaction of these two elements on each other. In the present state of things, it is not desirable that one of these elements should entirely absorb the other. Each can plead some historical justification of its existence. We cannot yet wholly dispense with either. If the dissolution of the Church of England into a mere voluntary sect, with the breaking up and dispersion of its vast territorial machinery, would certainly destroy some elements of order, conservatism and refinement, which are essential to the health of our highly-organized civilization, still more fatal to all progress and vitality would be the extinction of an earnest and enlightened Dissent, under the dead weight of an oppressive uniformity. What is to be desired for both these elements, is freer scope for internal expansion and reform, that each may fully develop its peculiar capacity for usefulness, and do its part effectually towards realizing in the future some nobler result than either at present could separately yield. Till the Church of England has undergone further reformation, and is restored to a closer dependence on the religious mind of the country,—to which it properly belongs, and of which it ought to be a faithful expression,—the Universities which are so intimately connected with the Church, however much their studies may be widened and their discipline improved, cannot furnish an atmosphere sufficiently pure and free for the vigorous growth of that kind of learning on which the spirit of Nonconformity subsists. All that we can at present insist on, in regard to them and to the Church, as a guarantee for present freedom and future reform, is the great constitutional principle, that their immense revenues—that invaluable educational fund—belong in no sense to the clergy, who hold them only in trust, but to the entire people of this realm, and that they are applicable to any moral and spiritual uses which the people, speaking through its legitimate organs, shall at any time see fit to decree. In the mean while, if Nonconformity would sustain its historical character and exercise its just influence in our social economy, it must make other provision for its highest mental wants than such as

the old Universities can supply. For Nonconformity—let the fashionable world say of it what they will—when we review its traditions and calculate its possibilities, is, after all, a great and stirring element of our national life, with vast resources of intellectual power as yet undeveloped for want of adequate culture and a fitting discipline. Its vigorous but conflicting elements need to be combined and harmonized, and have the broad impress of a noble nationality stamped on them, by the binding force of a common Academic centre; that it may take its place among the higher potencies of the land—that it may be led on in the march of progress and the battle for freedom by an intellectual aristocracy of its own—and rear up a learning, sustained by the sympathies of an awakened and instructed people, thorough, manly and vigorous, based on religious liberty and instinct with a principle of growth, to confront an elder learning, tenacious of the accumulations of ages, fixing its eye reverentially on the past, and polished into dignified courtesy by long intercourse with nobles and kings.

Considering the great importance of a supplementary provision for theological instruction attached to a national seat of learning like University College, we may notice some peculiar advantages for the attainment of this object in the hereditary principles of the religious body which is represented by Manchester New College. It has been for a century and a half the distinction of the English Presbyterians to repudiate the authority of all ecclesiastical creeds, to seek for Christianity in the Scriptures alone, and to submit those Scriptures to the unfettered scrutiny of the inquiring mind; and this broad, general principle is of more value than any particular doctrinal result to which it may have brought us, in the almost universal adoption of Unitarianism—because it plainly authorizes us never to close the door against the admission of any new conclusions that may be suggested by farther reflection and continued research. It is not possible, indeed, for any number of persons to enter into religious association without some great leading principle, held in common, to bind them together; or for any teacher of theology, if his instructions are to be worth anything, to be without clear and strong convictions of his own; any more than a man of science can conduct a manufacturing process, or construct a public work, without some positive views of chemical and mechanical laws, or teach his science systematically from the Professor's chair without the adoption of some guiding theory. But all such views and theories are held provisionally, in relation to some practical application that is to be made of the undoubted facts on which they rest, and always subject to the limitations and corrections of prolonged inquiry. What is obviously required by common sense and a regard to truth, both in scientific and in theological teaching, is this,—that the Professor in either case, assuming a

certain circle of facts, whether moral or physical, as the immediate subject of his instructions, shall be at full liberty to investigate and interpret them according to his honest belief of their inherent significance, and his perception of their relation to other groups of facts, in the world of man and in the world of matter, which constitute, together with them, the grand sum-total of this wonderful universe.

Man's indestructible consciousness of the spiritual affinities which connect him with the invisible Sovereignty of all things, and the historical expression, in its most perfect form, of that consciousness in the person and work of Jesus Christ, with their transforming influence on the condition of humanity through all ensuing time, furnish, as I apprehend it, the proper subject-matter of Christian theology; and till the facts which it assumes, shall be dissolved into mere phantoms of the imagination, or shall be shewn to have lost entirely their ancient meaning and value, Christian theology must keep its place among the most important departments of learning and speculation, and cannot be excluded from any course of Academic study which pretends to completeness.

There are some domains, if not of positive knowledge, yet of feeling and sentiment, and of those fundamental convictions which silently pervade and inform the whole moral life of man, in which, by a benevolent provision for the future harmonious development of humanity, the ultimate limit appears to have been reached, and the attainable type of perfection fixed, in the ages which have long passed away. Pure science, indeed, evolved out of the accumulation and comparison of facts, and their resolution into proximate laws, goes on with ever-swelling and ever-deepening stream from generation to generation; nor can we assign any limit to the possibilities of our future acquaintance with the structure and economy of the material universe. But this boundless field of fact does not furnish from itself, apart from the light cast on it by the contemplating mind, any explanation of its own meaning and purpose. It then only rises into harmony and significance, and becomes expressive of a great central thought, a grand moral idea, when it is reduced under principles, and surveyed from aspects, which were struck out by the deep forecast of genius and inspiration in the comparative infancy of our race. Without the guiding laws of truth and beauty which have been exemplified or inculcated in the master works of classical antiquity, and those higher moral and spiritual truths which have been bequeathed to us by an antiquity more venerable still, how would society have worked its way through the oppressive accumulation of new facts and the empiricism of an ever-widening experience! To Greece and Palestine we owe the present condition of civilized man. Strike out of the past the influence of their great minds—their poets, their sages, their

prophets—and how incalculably different would have been the whole course of human history! What a different race would now be spread over Europe and America! What a wild and shoreless ocean of experiences, dim and unmeaning as that which now covers China or Thibet, would have rolled over the perplexed and darkened spirits of men! But the power still working with deepest effect amid the agencies now operative on Europe, grows out of the fact of Christianity and its associated beliefs. For man's highest aim and surest guidance, we discover nothing within the apparent possibilities and prospects of the human race, to supersede the influence which has flowed down to us from the fountains of Hebrew inspiration, and to eclipse the type of religious perfection in the life of Christ; till the present conditions of our planet shall be changed to make way for a new geological era, and human nature as now constituted shall be succeeded by some nobler form of intellectual and spiritual existence. From the limits which confine, and the laws which govern, the possible growth and development of our race, and from the indissoluble connection of our past history with any future which may await us, we may safely pronounce Christian theology, thus widely interpreted, running back on one hand into historical realities, and shooting down on the other into the immutable principles of the human soul, to possess within itself all the conditions of a permanent and progressive branch of human learning. The facts on which it rests are fixed and unchangeable; in the conception and application of those facts, there is endless scope for the varied exercise of practical and philosophic wisdom, and free range for the boldest wing of religious poetry.

It is to this highest subject of human thought and interest, and a faithful administration of its influences to the varied requirements of the world, that the Christian Minister dedicates his life. There are those, I know, who think that his function is rapidly being superseded by more recent and more popular agencies of good. They remind us that the truths which he once almost exclusively proclaimed, are now finding their way in a more attractive form, through innumerable channels, to myriads and myriads of human souls; that the journalist is taking the place of the preacher; that the exciting pages which may be purchased at any railway station, are producing an effect which in former times far less surely and constantly followed a sermon; that the lecture-room, the picture-gallery, the concert-hall, and even the theatre, are supplying the mind with richer and more stimulating spiritual food, than the dull truisms dealt out week after week in the church. And it is impossible to deny the power of these influences—to deny that there is in them a great capacity of good. If the pulpit would keep its position in society, it must become more earnest and fervid; it must address itself more

to living realities and actual convictions; it must quit its beaten track of conventional topics, and bring the whole field of human action and interest within its wider view. But make every concession to the new agencies, and every deduction from the old—is there anything, after all, which can fill the place hitherto occupied in society by the Christian Church? Where else can those scattered influences of good and beauty which stream in upon us irregularly in our passage through the world, be gathered up and concentrated with such a solemn earnestness, blended with our sense of duty and of dependence on God, subjected to the grand formative law of our moral being, and interpreted in the light of that divine character which is the religious type of humanity? And it is the Christian Minister who is summoned to perform with faithfulness and humility this service for a brother's soul. What human vocation, measured by its intrinsic nobleness and not by the judgment of the world, is more exalted than this? The highest studies should prepare it. The finest endowments, intellectual and moral, may be exercised in it. When we see how much knowledge and ability are constantly devoted to the meanest occupations, which offer nothing to interest either the head or the heart, it does seem strange, that to a vocation so truly noble as the Christian Ministry,—representing not the priestly, but the prophetic, function of ancient times,—some men out of every class in life—all, of whatever origin and connections, who are conscious of any sympathy with the work and spirit of Christ—should not feel themselves irresistibly attracted, as to a field which affords exercise for their highest faculties and affections, and presents opportunities of the noblest usefulness. God, says our great Puritan poet, in one of his eloquent protests against a selfish, time-serving ministry,—God “can stir up rich fathers to bestow exquisite education upon their children, and so dedicate them to the service of the Gospel; he can make the sons of nobles his ministers, and princes to be Nazarites; for certainly there is no employment more honourable, more worthy to take up a great spirit, more requiring a generous and free nurture, than to be the messenger and herald of heavenly truth from God to man, and, by the faithful work of holy doctrine, to procreate a number of faithful men, making a kind of creation like to God's, by infusing his spirit of likeness into them, to their salvation, as God did into him; arising, to what climate soever he turn him, like that Sun of Righteousness that sent him, with healing in his wings, and new light to break in upon the chill and gloomy hearts of his hearers, raising out of darksome barrenness a delicious and fragrant spring of saving knowledge and good works.”*

Two obstacles have stood in the way of this just and natural

* Milton's *Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence against Smectymnus*.

direction of public feeling—the slavery of hierarchies, and the frequent meanness and dependency of sectarianism. As respects the latter, two remedies suggest themselves for its removal: first, a higher preliminary education, which shall enrich the soul with the spirit of self-dependence and of quiet, inward dignity, and make the poor but highminded scholar, even in an humble station, a nobler and happier being, than the mercenary and sensual worldling in the midst of his wealth; and, secondly, such an improved constitution of our religious societies as shall secure to ministers more freedom of action and speech, and provide for them more certain and adequate subsistence, but, above all, shall aid and foster their labours with a larger demonstration of that loving interest and sympathy which is more genial and refreshing to a human soul than the outward honour coldly paid to mere eminence of position in the world. But here, as in all other things, there has been action and reaction. If the mean and dependent condition to which the Christian Ministry is too often reduced, repels men of refined and sensitive natures—all whose feelings and aptitudes are in closest harmony with its objects—from entering it; sometimes, also, it must be confessed, the low qualifications of those who assume its functions, deter congregations from making the efforts of which they are capable, to improve its condition. I do not excuse either party. There has been grievous deficiency on both sides. Evil, arise where it may, is sure to beget and perpetuate corresponding evil. Our wisdom now is, not to look back on a past which cannot be recalled, but forward into a richer and brighter future which we may make our own. Of this I am certain, that if only a few men of high gifts and high culture shall hereafter take up the Christian Ministry in a disinterested spirit and with an earnest purpose, they will at once act on the temper of our congregations, and stimulate them to new exertions, as soon as it is seen that the services of men worthy of such exertions, can only thus be secured.

I would observe, in conclusion, that, independently of providing for the suitable education of men devoted to the Christian Ministry, and even in case the number of aspirants to that office should still continue limited, it is of importance to the true interests of learning and a thorough culture of the human mind, that the study of theology and religious philosophy should be adequately maintained in connection with every seat of the higher education. It is a serious defect in the institutions of Nonconformists generally, that they are too exclusively adapted to popular action and influence, and do not afford a sufficiency of direct encouragement to the pursuit of abstract truth and the cultivation of deep and original learning. The class of men who are most active in supporting them, are too eager for immediate and palpable results, and often ask, with utilitarian impatience and short-sightedness, What is the use of all this speculation and

research? It may be replied to them, that there are many principles at work in society, and fraught with wide-spread effects, whose existence is not very perceptible on the surface of things. None but those who have closely studied the history of opinion, would suspect the silent and searching influence that penetrates into every region of human thought and action, from the solitary chamber of the patient student and profound thinker. Ruhnken, whose universal scholarship well qualified him to attest the fact, has told us, that he could trace the mind of Plato in the sentiments and even in the phraseology of Greek writers of every class, far down into the eventful period which is marked by the transition from Heathenism to Christianity. Paley, in the Preface to his *Moral Philosophy*, has made a similar remark on the wide-spread influence of the abstract reasonings of Locke and Rousseau. What constantly strikes one in society, is the absence, even among educated men, of first principles—such principles, I mean, as go down to the root of a matter and furnish the true solution of a question—on the most important topics of Morals, Government, Religion, Christianity, the moment conversation quits the beaten round of recognized party opinion in which the ideas of the majority mechanically revolve. This often arises, not from unwillingness to inquire, or aversion to the trouble of forming an independent judgment, but from inability to ascertain the facts and work out the principles which are necessary to a rational opinion; although, if those facts and principles were once submitted on reliable authority, the common sense of mankind, however incompetent to elaborate them for itself, would at once perceive the truth contained in them and be able to apply it. It is indispensable, therefore, to the maintenance of a high standard of mental culture and an enlightened condition of public opinion, that some provision should be attached to every seat of learning for the undisturbed prosecution, by a few competent men, of those more recondite studies which do not lie in immediate proximity to the popular interest and persuasion of the day, but which penetrate, nevertheless, to the hidden source of the deeper power that silently moulds and directs them. A large audience and conspicuous social position are not essential to the production of strong and lasting effect upon society. The love of truth and moral earnestness are conditions of far more importance. Who can estimate the influence which Saumur, Amsterdam, and even Warrington, exercised on the Protestant mind of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? Doddridge's *Correspondence* and Wesley's *Diary* attest the profound impression of Dr. John Taylor's writings and teachings on the opinions of his contemporaries; yet the highest position he ever reached, was that of Professor of Divinity and Moral Philosophy at Warrington. Le Clerc and Limborch belonged to no great hierarchy, and lectured in a

private academy; yet their instructions influenced the current of theological thought throughout Europe. Two men of competent acquirements and abilities, with leisure and repose of mind to concentrate all their energies on their proper function, would abundantly suffice, under ordinary circumstances, for the adequate cultivation of theology in all its essential branches. For Christian theology may be comprehensively distributed under two principal heads—the historical and the philosophical. We have, first, to study the phenomena of man's religious consciousness, as they lie scattered over the records of ages, or are embodied in the sacred literature which most purely and prominently expresses them; and, secondly, to explore and evolve the principles which underlie those phenomena and explain them, and to assign them their place and working in the general constitution of human nature. We may abjure philosophy as much as we choose in the study of theology; but every form of religious belief implies a philosophy, crude or matured, and cannot be separated from it. History and philosophy must go hand in hand, for either to yield a satisfactory result. History would merely accumulate barren and unmeaning facts, unless it could combine and distribute them according to some organic law which has its source in philosophy; and philosophy would beat the air with vain words, and cheat the mind with a juggle of unprofitable abstractions, unless it rooted itself in that deep human consciousness which finds an ever-varying expression in the facts of universal history. I will not disguise my earnest hope, that a foundation is this day laid for a thorough and scientific cultivation of theology through many future years, under the blended influences of freedom and holy reverence, in permanent connection with a rising, a noble, and, what I trust we may hereafter with still more appropriateness call, a national seat of English learning.

In the foregoing remarks, I have expressed what I think desirable—what it will be my wish to aim at—not what I can myself hope to accomplish. On the first transition to a new state of things, our endeavours must to a considerable extent be tentative, and obstructed inevitably with many unforeseen difficulties. We must do, not what in itself perhaps might be best, but what is possible. I can truly say, that I look upon myself as but a pioneer for better men to come after me. If by diligence and fidelity I can safely and successfully conduct our Academy through its first years of trial and difficulty, I shall feel I have fulfilled my humble share of duty, and be prepared to resign the helm to abler and more experienced hands. Perhaps my fittest title to the responsible office in which circumstances have placed me, will be found in the strong conviction which I have always entertained of the desirableness of the change now made in the external position of Manchester New College, and my determined purpose, through such years of health and vigour as may remain

for me, to give proof, if possible, to the public, that it was a necessary and a beneficial change. It is always good, however, to set a high ideal before us, conscious as we may be of inability fully to attain it. Dissent has been incalculably injured by keeping its standard of culture and refinement low. We have not striven, as we ought, to lift up our condition to the height of our ideas, but too often been content to bring down our ideas to the level of our condition. No enthusiasm—the parent of all that is great and good—can possibly co-exist with such a state of things. May the influences diffused from this Hall tend effectually to introduce a better! The courtesy and consideration which from the first I have myself experienced from its authorities, are to me an encouraging omen of future good. Birth and worldly riches are not the things that we value here. Every man, be his origin what it may, who passes with effect through the refining influences of a high education, is completely raised by them above all that is mean and vulgar, and is fit for the companionship of the noblest in the land. For the spirit of religion is essentially the spirit of courtesy; and Manchester New College and University Hall will not miss their highest aim, if they shall combine to form men who unite in their characters, their attainments and their bearing, the three elements of the Christian, the Scholar and the Gentleman. To exert that blended and most benignant influence on the dark, degraded and sorrowing masses of our kind—to comfort, reclaim, instruct and elevate them—to make them men, citizens, Christians—is the noblest mission to which mind and heart can devote themselves; and for such mission it is the office of our institution to prepare the minds and hearts that are confided to it. In discharging the duties which grow out of that office, I know I may rely on the help and encouragement of my respected colleague, Mr. Smith,—of my friend, the Principal of University Hall, whose parentage and inherited principles, not less than his scientific reputation, proclaim his eminent fitness for the important situation which he holds,—and of my still earlier friend and venerated instructor, the excellent Visitor of Manchester New College, whose name is a guarantee that any institution with which he is associated, will protect with equal care the interests of religion and of learning. I advisedly connect religion with learning, because I am sure they can never be separated without mutual injury. It will be our true policy, I am persuaded, to take a decided position from the first on our distinguishing religious principle. Let it express as spiritual and catholic a Christianity as our forefathers ever contended for, or as the religious temper of the present times shall demand; but let it be distinctly avowed and consistently acted on. We gain nothing but universal distrust by compromise and concealment. Let men of every creed, if they will,—the Catholic and the Jew,—find shelter under our roof

and welcome at our board, and learn with us that best of lessons, that men with differing creeds may be brothers still; but let not their presence withhold us from the freest exercise and fullest enjoyment of a religious communion, in which we do not compel them to join, but which they would not respect us the more, for denying to those whose religious convictions are in harmony with our own. I trust that as our united institution develops its proper character, it will be more distinctly surrounded by religious influences, and its onward course be consecrated and blest by those daily and weekly exercises of social worship, without which no place of education can fashion as it ought the mind and character of youth, and permanently elevate the social condition of mankind.

HUMPHREY CHETHAM :

A SERMON PREACHED AT THE OLD CHAPEL, DUKINFIELD, SUNDAY, OCT. 16, 1853, IN REFERENCE TO THE BICENTENARY ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH.

Prov. x. 7: "The memory of the Just is blessed."

ON this day, two centuries ago, as your ancestors returned from morning worship,—whether at the domestic chapel of the estate (now a picturesque ruin), where Samuel Eaton* pleaded with warm zeal for what he deemed an orthodox faith and liberty of conscience, or at the church of the neighbouring parish, where John Harrison† with not less zeal pleaded for the same faith and for the church government of presbyters,—it is not unreasonable to suppose that, as they slowly ascended the village "brow," they talked sadly of the sickness and recent death of a godly neighbour, known to all the country round, and held in high esteem for his commercial integrity and success, for the religiousness of his life, for his public spirit and his goodness to the poor. As they paused for a moment on reaching the eminence on which we are now assembled for worship, we can believe that some eyes were turned with a sorrowful expression in the direction of that picturesque moated residence, Clayton Hall, where Humphrey Chetham had long lived, and whence a few days previously his body had been removed to its last resting-place in the collegiate church.

I have thought it neither improper nor undesirable to avail myself of the recent bicentenary anniversary of the death of the

* Samuel Eaton was an early Independent, and a man in some matters before his age. After leaving Dukinfield, he went to Stockport, where, in connection with the grammar-school, in 1662, the Act of Uniformity found him, and whence he was ejected. He was the opponent of John Knowles, the first Unitarian in Cheshire.

† John Harrison was the ejected minister of Ashton-under-Lyne.

great Puritan benefactor of Manchester, for the purpose of giving a brief and popular sketch of his life and times, and pointing the moral which they teach. As to the propriety of the topic to which I now ask your attention, let me say a word or two. I have been asked during the week—and the question by no means surprised me—What have we, as a particular religious society, to do with the memory of Humphrey Chetham, who professed not our faith, nor dwelt in our village, nor made it the object of any of his benefactions? In reply, I would say, we have an interest in the life and fame of every disciple of our holy Master, who has adorned by his worth our common Christian profession. Our religion teaches us to bless *the memory of the just*; and the Bible instructs us that a just man is one *that doeth justly, loveth mercy, and walketh humbly with his God*. We are to keep the eminently righteous, and especially those that from pure motives have fed and instructed the poor, in honourable remembrance. With the Gospels in our hands, which teach us the religion by recording the life of Jesus Christ, we may surely be permitted to use the biography of any one who has gone *about doing good*, as a means of moral and religious instruction. As to the local objection, let me observe, that the charities of Humphrey Chetham were not mere local benefactions. The moral light and social warmth diffused by schools, well-selected and public libraries, and other judicious charities, can no more be confined within a prescribed pale, than the light and warmth of the sun can be confined to some favoured valley or some outstanding hill. Besides, who shall say that, during the past two centuries, none of the forefathers of the hamlet were instructed or bettered in their lot through his large-minded bounties?

Again, I do not ask your attention to my present subject on the ground of any supposed doctrinal accord with the men of the seventeenth century; but I will not consent, on this account, to dissociate my sympathies from the Puritan Fathers of England. I feel that it is an honourable, though responsible, distinction, to be able to claim descent from men who, by their purity and courage, kept alive the light of spiritual religion through a dark and critical period of English history, and whose merit it is, according to the testimony of an unfriendly historian, to have fanned and saved from extinction the apparently dying flame of civil and religious liberty. It is, I firmly believe, an important thing for a religious body to be bound by historical ties to good men of a former age. Some men, I know, declaim against the folly and “cant,” as they are pleased to call it, of reverencing men of a past age. I willingly admit that reverence for the past may be carried to excess. I know it will be injurious to those who fail to regard present duties; but I have yet to learn that our principles may not be strengthened, and our sense of duty may not be made more clear, by contemplating with becoming

respect and honour those who, preceding us, have been faithful servants of God in their day and generation.

Humphrey Chetham was born at Crumpsall, a hamlet adjoining Cheetham Hill, in 1580. He was the fifth son of Henry Chetham, descended from an ancient and respectable family in the county of Lancaster, the head of which, in the unhappy wars of the Roses, had fought on the losing side, and been stripped of his lands soon after Henry VII. ascended the throne. In the quaint language of Fuller, in his "*Worthies of England*," amongst whom Humphrey Chetham is justly enrolled, "the posterity of Sir Geoffrey Chetham were unwilling to fly far from their old though destroyed nest, and got themselves a handsome habitation at Crumpsall, hard by, where James, elder brother of this Humphrey Chetham, did reside." He was baptized, July 10, at the collegiate church, of which Dr. Chadderton, Bishop of Chester, was then warden, whom a contemporary described as "a learned man and liberal, given to hospitality, and a more frequent preacher and *baptizer* than other Bishops of his time."*

Humphrey Chetham received (it is with every probability conjectured) his education at the Manchester Grammar-school, an institution founded in the early part of the sixteenth century by Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, of whom it is recorded to his praise that he was a promoter of learning and an enemy of monkish superstition, and that, through his boldness and independence in resisting the Pope, he died in a state of excommunication. Schools of this kind were, in the early periods of our history, when knowledge was rare, and the population and their means equally scanty, great local blessings. Had they been always conducted in the liberal spirit of their founders, they might be so still. Hollingworth, the historian of Manchester, from whom I have already quoted, says that Bishop Oldham, "out of the good mind he bare to the county of Lancaster (being, I believe, his native county), perceiving that the children thereof, having pregnant wits, were for the most part brought up rudely and idly, that knowledge might be advanced (the art of grammar being the ground and fountain of all the liberal arts and sciences), and that children might be occupied in good learning, better taught to love, honour and dread God and his laws, founded the free-school in Manchester."

The sunken fortunes of his family, happily for himself and for his native county, compelled Humphrey Chetham and his younger brothers to embark in trade. Manchester had at this early period become, indeed had been for considerably more than a century, the great seat of the manufacture of the clothing in common use by the people of the country; it was also the centre of action for merchants whose transactions had become extensive.

* Hollingworth's History of Manchester.

The progress of the trade of this country may be viewed in other and more important lights than as a system of barter (serviceable on both sides) of the necessities of life. It affected and rapidly accelerated the progress of civilization, and it was closely connected with religious liberty. It served more than any other single influence to break through and destroy those feudal institutions which fostered a haughty spirit of caste, and were strong barriers against improvement and social progress of every kind. An instance of the beneficial effect of trade in sweeping away worn-out, useless and mischievous institutions, is to be seen in the history of the Sanctuary, which existed in Manchester, with all the strange privileges belonging to those institutions, till the reign of Henry VIII. Then an Act of Parliament was passed, which throws more light than any other known existing document on the character of the manufactures and trade of the town three centuries back. The preamble states that Manchester was well inhabited, and distinguished for its trade both in linens and woollens, had obtained riches and wealthy living, and employed many artificers and poor people; that by their "strict and true dealings" they had given rise to the resort of many strangers. It then recites that many of the processes of manufacture and customs of trade were endangered by the resort of light and evil-disposed persons to the town, who had fled from the consequences of their misdeeds, and found a refuge in the privileged precincts of the Collegiate Church. By the salutary Act then passed, the rights of the Sanctuary were abolished in Manchester, and transferred to the Cathedral of Chester, a city in which there were no manufactures to be imperilled, and where there were municipal officers possessed of large powers for curbing and punishing evil-doers.

The connection of trade with religious liberty was also strikingly illustrated in Manchester, as well as in London and Norwich. Civil tyranny and religious persecution drove many ingenious and industrious artizans from France and the Netherlands into England, where they found quiet and protection, in return for which they enriched their adopted country by their industry and manufacturing skill. The enormities of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, the religious wars of France, and especially the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, drove thousands of skilled artizans into exile. Many of those from Belgium settled in Manchester, and gave a rapid impulse to the manufacturing prosperity of the town.

The branch of trade pursued by the Chethams was to purchase goods from the manufacturers of Manchester and the neighbourhood, and the sale of them to the dealers throughout England. Wealth flowed rapidly in upon the upright and energetic traders. It did not taint the character or pervert the principles of Humphrey Chetham. "He signally improved himself" (says Fuller,

who derived his information from Mr. Johnson, one of the clergy of Manchester and a trustee appointed by Chetham) "in piety and outward prosperity. He was a diligent reader of the Scriptures and of the works of sound divines; a respecter of such ministers which (as) he accounted truly godly, upright, sober, discreet and sincere." Content with his rank and happy in the sphere of duties and simple pleasures which befitted the English merchant, he not only did not aim at, but declined some public honours. Knighthood was offered him soon after the accession of Charles I.; but as that compliment was then frequently offered to wealthy men with the sole object of extorting exorbitant fees, the fact of his declining the honour is perhaps unimportant. He purchased large estates, and amongst them a picturesque residence at Clayton Hall, situated a mile or two on this side of Manchester. In 1634, he was named by the Judges as a fit and proper person for the shrievalty of the county. He would fain have escaped the responsibility of the office, on both public and private grounds. He wished not to be brought into the King's view, feeling that the honour would be a burthen to him; and his sagacity enabled him to foresee that unsettled and calamitous times were impending. But in spite of his reluctance and disclaimers, he was appointed Sheriff in the year 1633-4.

It was characteristic of the simplicity of his habits and a sign of his indifference to the vanities of heraldry, that up to the time of his shrievalty he had not assumed the armorial bearings of his family. In consequence of his connection with trade, difficulties, real or pretended, were made respecting his right to assume arms. The gentlest natures will sometimes resent as well as resist. In the motto which he put under the crest which he in the end obtained, *Quod tuum tene*, so little descriptive of his general personal character, it was thought there might be a reference to his determination not to resign a clear right to mere prejudices or to the pride of a class.

Having the office of Sheriff forced upon him, he determined so to perform its duties that it should in his hands lose nothing of its wonted honour. Although there were some of the country gentry who resented the intrusion into knightly rank of one who, though sprung from gentle ancestors, had had the sense and industry to achieve his own fortune, there were not wanting others of better mind, who willingly paid him the honour due to his character even more than his office. "He discharged," says Fuller, "the place with great honour; insomuch that very good gentlemen of birth and estate did wear his cloth at the assize, to testify their unfeigned affection to him."

In consequence of his official position, he was called upon to collect the illegal impost called Ship-money, invented by the King for the sake of dispensing with the unacceptable services of Parliament. Whatever might be his individual opinion on the

conduct of the King and his advisers, the tax had received a colourable judicial sanction, and he collected it. He had none of the political enthusiasm or high bearing of a Hampden and a Pym, and he is not entitled to any share of their fame as fearless patriots, willing, if need be, to shed their blood for their country's liberties; but he quietly performed his prescribed duties, and chalked out for himself a path to usefulness and honour.

In 1640, Mr. Chetham was nominated High Collector of the Subsidies for the county of Lancaster. In 1643, he was (still greatly against his will) appointed General Treasurer of the county. When the civil war broke out, the county of Lancaster suffered more immediately and more severely than any part of the kingdom. There was not merely the presence of a hostile Scotch army, but a famine, and that followed, as is often the case, by a pestilence. In such a state of things, it was no enviable post to be charged with the collection of the general and local taxation. When the Royal authority was superseded by that of the Parliament, Humphrey Chetham still possessed the confidence of the Government, and was still burthened with the office of Treasurer. Besides supplying the wants of the forces in his own county, and they were considerable (for we learn from a document bearing date 1644, that the army was "in great want and distress, and the county wholly spoiled and wasted by the enemy"), he had also sometimes to provide the funds required in the county of Chester, where the troops were under the command of the then proprietor of this estate, Colonel Dukinfield. Copies have been preserved of urgent notes from the sturdy warrior for relief, not unaccompanied by the threat of marching his troops into Lancashire, and quartering them upon the county.

Humphrey Chetham's residence, as well as his official duties, brought him into contact, during this sad period of our history, with much anxiety, distress and misery. From the moment that the first hostile gun was fired against the citizens in the streets of Manchester by the followers of Lord Derby, until the entire cessation of the war, all the usual resources of the ten thousand people who were then resident in Manchester were cut off; trade was entirely destroyed; for confidence is the breath that animates the commercial body; and war, and above all civil war, is always destructive of that. Oh, let those who are now, with more of passion than patriotic wisdom, sounding the trumpet-note of war, and needlessly urging our rulers to precipitate this country, and with it all Europe, into a state of warfare, think of all the indigence, anxiety, sufferings and horrors which that state brings in its train; and instead of manifesting impatience at the continuance of peace, let them pray that our statesmen may be enabled to protect at the same time the honour of our beloved country and the peace of Europe! So profound and varied were the sufferings and indigence of the people of South Lancashire, the

district in which manufactures and commerce had previously flourished, that collections were, by order of Parliament, made on their behalf in the principal churches in London and other places.

We may feel assured that the philanthropy of Humphrey Chetham alleviated as far as possible the miseries of his neighbours during this painful and protracted struggle. Manchester was besieged by the Royal troops, and defended successfully on behalf of the Parliament by the inhabitants. The neighbourhood was the scene of many battles. Wigan, Stockport, Warrington, Chowbent, and various other places, witnessed the conflict of fellow-citizens. Bolton was besieged by the King's troops under Prince Rupert, and when taken, the inhabitants were exposed to the violence of troops influenced by religious as well as political hatred, and infuriated by previous checks and defeats. The neighbouring town of Ashton-under-Lyne suffered fearfully. The following picture of the misery that prevailed in South Lancashire is taken from an appeal issued in the year 1649, and signed, amongst others, by several of the personal friends of Humphrey Chetham.

"The hand of God is evidently seen stretched out upon the county, chastening it with a three-corded scourge of sword, pestilence and famine, all at once afflicting it. They have borne the heat and burthen of a first and second war in an especial manner above other parts of the nation. Through them the two great bodies of the late *Scottish* and *English* armies passed, and in their very bowels was that great fighting, bloudshed and breaking. In this county hath the plague of pestilence been raging these three years and upwards, occasioned chiefly by the wars. There is a very great scarcity and dearth of all provisions, especially of all sorts of grain, particularly that kind by which that country is most sustained, which is full six-fold the price that of late it hath been. All trade by which they have been much supported is utterly decayed. It would melt any good heart to see the numerous swarms of begging poore, and the many families that pine away at home, not having faces to beg. Very many are craving almes at other men's dores, who were used to give others almes at their dores—to see paleness, nay death, appear in the cheeks of the poor, and often to hear of some found dead in their houses or highways for want of bread.

"But particularly the townes of *Wigan* and *Ashton*, with the neighbouring parts, lying at present under the sore stroak of God in the pestilence, in one whereof are full two thousand poor, who for three months and upwards have been restrained: no relief to be had for them in the ordinary course of law, there being none at present to act as Justices of the Peace. The collections in our congregations (their only support hitherto) being generally very slack and slender, those wanting ability to helpe

who have hearts to pity them. Most men's estates being much drained by the wars, and now almost quite exhasted by the present scarcity, and many other burthens incumbent upon them, there is no bonds to keep in the infected, hunger-starved poore, whose breaking out jeapoardeth all the neighbourhood; some of them already, being at the point to perish through famine, have fetch in and eaten carion and other unwholesome food, to the destroying of themselves and increasing of the infection; and the more to provoke pity and mercy, it may be considered that this fatal contagion had its rise evidently from the wounded souldiers of our army left there for cure." *

These were the miserable results of war. Through scenes of this heart-sickening kind did the benevolent man of whom we are speaking sorrowfully drag the closing years of his earthly pilgrimage. His chief personal anxiety was to make a wise disposal of the great wealth which in times of tranquillity he had accumulated. It must not, however, be supposed that he did nothing in the cause of charity while alive, and that, like some founders, he attempted to atone for a life of parsimonious cruelty by devoting the wealth which he could no longer enjoy to charitable purposes. No; his last will and testament was only the completion of a scheme of benevolence of which he had tried and proved the value during a portion of his life. From this interesting document it appears (and the fact is mentioned without any ostentation) that he had "during his life taken up and maintained fourteen poor boys of the town of Manchester, six of the town of Salford, and two of the town of Droylsden; in all, twenty-two. "Having never married," says his principal biographer (the late Mr. Whatton, of Manchester), "he thus became a father of the fatherless and destitute; and doubtless many were the children of adversity that, during the life-time of this good man, successively found protection in his fostering and paternal benevolence." He did not forget, in his zeal for public charities, the claims which his nearer kindred had upon him. It incidentally appears from his will that upon two of his nephews he had settled large estates; and so entirely did the charitable appropriation of his wealth meet with their approval, that he directed his trustees to apply to them for further sums for carrying out his educational charities, should more be required than he proposed to leave. "It is observable," says Mr. Whatton, "by an examination of the numerous documents in the treasury of the college, that Mr. Chetham left behind him a great variety of wills; and it would be curious and interesting to trace the history of his intentions

* Dated May 24, 1649. This document, which is entitled, "A True Representation of the Present and Lamentable Condition of the County of Lancaster," &c., is reprinted in the "Tracts relating to the Military Proceedings in Lancashire during the Great Civil War," published by the Chetham Society, pp. 278, 279.

as they present themselves from the first of these instruments to the last. Some scheme of charity was ever uppermost in his thoughts. At one time he contemplated a suitable provision for the clergy of certain chapelries within or contiguous to which his property was situated; and at another, he had a plan for maintaining a number of aged and indigent persons in certain parishes in which he had resided. His views would seem to have varied with the extent of his acquisitions, until he was finally enabled to devise and execute one grand object, and, by concentrating his means, to render the exercise of his charity more decidedly extensive and efficient."

Amongst various minor benefactions of his, we find one which curiously illustrates the dearth of books at that period, and a curious use to which churches were put as places for the people to read in. He bequeathed the sum of £200 for the purchase of godly English books, to be chained upon desks in the churches of Manchester and Bolton, and in the chapels of Turton, Walmersley and Gorton. But the two great foundations by which his name is rendered famous, were an educational establishment for the clothing, boarding, educating, and afterwards apprenticing, the children of the poor, and a free public library. The catholic spirit in which all the details of these charities were conceived, is deserving of attention. The boys were to be chosen from the poor inhabitants of certain townships in which his principal estates were situated, thus indicating his adhesion to the great principle, that property has its *duties* as well as its *rights*. There was no stipulation of creed, for all were eligible who were children of poor but honest parents, not illegitimate, nor diseased, lame or blind, when chosen. They were to be received at six years of age, and maintained and educated till they were ready to be apprenticed to some honest and useful trade.

Of charitable benefactions of this kind there were many examples in every part of England, and especially where trade had flourished. One distinguished and enlightened commercial benefactor, Sir Thomas Gresham, had preceded him (he died the very year that Chetham was born); and another scarcely less distinguished philanthropist springing out of the trading classes,—Edward Colston, of Bristol,—followed him. But the other great benefaction founded by Humphrey Chetham was in a direction in which he had few predecessors. Libraries were at that time rare, except in connection with the two Universities and some of the Cathedrals. A perfectly free library existed nowhere, and it is a most remarkable fact, as shewing how far this good man was in advance of his times, that it was not till full two centuries after he had made provisions for founding the Library in Manchester, that the example was followed. Had Humphrey Chetham's purpose in respect to his library been carried out in its spirit by every successive generation of feoffees, the Chetham Library would

have supplied to Manchester those urgent wants which have recently called into existence that admirable institution, one of the best ornaments of that great city, the Free Public Library now under the charge of the Corporation.

The two channels into which the stream of Humphrey Chetham's benefactions ran, different though parallel, were the result of his Puritan habits of thought. Careful attention to education was a type of this remarkable class of men, and not merely the education furnished in schools, but the after and more important education of the mind and heart. They were the men who carried on the work of religious reformation,—who rescued the Bible, the Book of books, from the seclusion into which, by priestcraft and Popish superstition, it had been thrust. They were lovers of books and promoters of learning. A striking proof of this is given in the history of the Pilgrim Fathers, who, when denied religious freedom at home, carried religion and freedom, and with them a high civilization, into the wilderness on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. No sooner were they planted in peaceful society in America, though struggling with disease and the dread of famine, than they took steps for founding an institution where University learning might be taught to their children and their children's children, wisely thinking that if they once allowed the sacred, life-giving lamp of knowledge to go out, all that they most valued, all for which they had quitted their native hearths, and encountered the perils of the sea and of the untracked wilderness, would be in jeopardy of being lost.

One of this noble army of confessors, a gentleman by birth and education, whose early years had been passed in the walls of a manor house in the county of Nottingham, the archiepiscopal palace at Scrooby, did not hesitate to earn his bread at Leyden by the labour of an artizan, and with true Puritan instinct he chose the printing-press as his instrument of labour. Some of the greatest collections of books in existence in England in the time of Humphrey Chetham, owed their existence to men trained in Puritan principles. Of this number, Sir Robert Cotton was, I believe, one; and certainly another was Sir Thomas Bodley, the great benefactor of Oxford, and the founder of its matchless Library, who in early life fled from England to escape the Marian persecution, and received a part of his education in the city of Geneva, being a pupil of the illustrious Calvin.

The Puritans were, I admit, not faultless. They were on some points narrow and fanatical; but they were always true to certain great principles. They revered the spiritual nature of men, and they put a high value on everything that assisted in its cultivation. They had faith in the power of religion to save and to exalt the human being, and they were wise enough to perceive that religion could not be kept pure, and could not produce its

rightful effect, unless learning was upheld and education unfolded the faculties of the mind.

The will of Humphrey Chetham was signed on the 16th of December, 1651. He had then reached and passed the three-score years and ten, beyond which inspired wisdom declares that man's strength becomes *labour and sorrow*. Though oppressed with infirmities, he lived nearly two years longer; and then, in a ripe old age, full of faith and hope—above all, of the better gift of CHARITY, he surrendered his spirit to God.*

I shall attempt no formal panegyric on this enlightened benefactor. If the recital of his actions have not raised your admiration, I am sure no rhetoric within my power would do it.

The portrait of him preserved in the Hospital exhibits to us the features of a wise and thoughtful man—profoundly calm, almost sad, in its expression—the brow remarkably lofty—the whole revealing a man of no common mark, capable of impressing his example and memory on a future and distant age.

It has been observed that it was somewhat a disgrace to Manchester that no monument was raised to this its great benefactor. This disgrace is now removed; and to-day the worshipers in the church where Humphrey Chetham was baptized, and where his funeral obsequies were celebrated, will enjoy the opportunity of contemplating two interesting memorials of him, a statue and a memorial window, placed there by a citizen of Manchester, who received his education in the Chetham Hospital, and who is happy in devoting a portion of the wealth which he has since obtained to an expression of his reverence and gratitude.

The times immediately succeeding Humphrey Chetham's death were not favourable to schemes having a moral or literary object. There was an unsettled government; then a violent re-action;

* Various dates have been assigned to the death of Humphrey Chetham, viz. Oct. 16, Oct. 12, and September 20. The first is certainly wrong; the second is, we believe, the date of his burial. The third is taken from the "Gorton Historical Recorder," a very careful compilation made by Mr. John Higson, and is said to be founded on an entry in the parish register of deaths. Mr. Higson's statement is, "Humphrey Chetham, Esq., died September 20, in his 74th year. Tradition says this humane gentleman, when residing at Clayton Hall, constantly attended Gorton chapel, coming on horseback down the fields attached to the hall farm, and thence up the old 'Green Lane.' In winter this road must have been miserable indeed, thus shewing he must have been zealous for personal attendance on the public means of grace. On the south side of the old chapel, nearly adjoining the chancel, was a small raised gallery, known as 'Chetham loft.'" Mr. Higson also states that the pious bequest to Gorton chapel,—a large chest of books containing about 50 volumes of folios, &c. (the works of Calvin, Perkin and Preston are specified),—is still in existence. "They have been removed into the Sunday-school, the minister keeping the key." This is a type of the administration of too many educational charities in England, from which the persons intended by the founders to be benefited are systematically locked out. It appears from some documents preserved in the Chetham Hospital, that the body of Humphrey Chetham was embalmed. This circumstance makes more probable the unusual length of time which elapsed between his death and burial.

and debauchery and tyranny, civil and ecclesiastical, ran riot in the land. Afterwards, revolution and long periods of warfare occupied the thoughts of the nation. It has been our privilege to enjoy nearly forty years of peace, during which trade and all the arts of civilization have made rapid progress. The virtues and wisdom of Humphrey Chetham have at length, in these happy times, received their due reward. Great men can afford to await the sure, though sometimes tardy, payment of time.

The further moral which I would impress upon you from this noble example is, that to do good and communicate you forget not. Let the wealthy and the powerful especially realize to themselves their privileges and consequent duties. They are stewards of God's bounties: let them be ever ready to distribute. Let them not, however, fall into the sad mistake, that charity is the mere careless, thoughtless handing over to others of that which they cannot themselves use. Without thoughtfulness and caution, their so-called charities may prove a curse rather than a blessing, by preventing self-reliance and personal exertion, by undermining honest independence, and thus increasing the destitution which they seek to relieve. Let them especially devote themselves to that best form of charity, EDUCATION, which, when perfectly carried out, elevates the mind, purifies the heart, makes the child of earth a child of God, and fits him to be an heir of Heaven.

ANECDOTE OF BARROW, WILKINS AND BAXTER.

DR. WILKINS, then minister of St. Lawrence-Jewry, being indisposed, desired Dr. Barrow to give him a sermon the next Sunday, which he readily consented to do. Accordingly, at the time appointed he came, with an aspect pale and meagre and unpromising, slovenly and carelessly dressed, his collar unbuttoned, his hair uncombed, &c. Thus accoutred, he mounts the pulpit and begins his prayer. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar, as if the church were falling, and they scampering to save their lives, each shifting for himself with great precipitation. There was such a noise of pattens of serving-maids and ordinary women, and of unlocking of pews, and cracking of seats, caused by the younger sort hastily climbing over them, that, I confess, I thought all the congregation were mad; but the good Dr., seeming not to take notice of this disturbance, proceeds, names his text, and preached his sermon to two or three gathered, or rather left together, of which number, as it fortunately happened, Mr. Baxter, that eminent Nonconformist, was one, who afterwards gave Dr. Wilkins a visit, and commended the sermon to that degree, that he said he never heard a better discourse. There was also amongst those who stayed out the sermon a certain young man, who thus accosted Dr. Barrow as he came down from the pulpit—"Sir, be not dismayed, for I assure you it was a good sermon." By his

age and dress he seemed to be an apprentice or the foreman of a shop, but we never heard more of him. I asked the Dr. what he thought when he saw the congregation running away. "I thought," said he, "they did not like me or my sermon, and I have no reason to be angry with them for that." "But what was your opinion," said I, "of the apprentice?" "I take him," replied he, "to be a very civil person, and if I could meet with him I'd present him with a bottle of wine."

There were then in the parish a company of formal, grave and wealthy citizens, who, having been many years under famous ministers, had a great opinion of their skill in divinity, and their ability to judge of the goodness and badness of sermons. Many of these came in a body to Dr. Wilkins, to expostulate with him why he suffered such an ignorant, scandalous fellow, meaning Dr. Barrow, to have the use of his pulpit. It happened to be when Mr. Baxter was with Dr. Wilkins. They came, as I have said before, in full cry, saying they wondered he should permit such a man to preach before them, who looked like a starved cavalier who had been long sequestered and out of his living for delinquency, and came up to London to beg, now the King was restored, and much more to this purpose. He let them run themselves out of breath; when they had done speaking, he replied to them in this manner: "The person you thus despise, I assure you, is a pious man, an eminent scholar and an excellent preacher; for the truth of the last, I appeal to Mr. Baxter here present, who heard the sermon you so vilify. I am sure you believe Mr. Baxter is a competent judge, and will pronounce according to truth." Then turning to him, "Pray, Sir," said he, "do me the favour to declare your opinion concerning the sermon now in controversy, which you heard at our church the last Sunday." Then did Mr. Baxter very candidly give the sermon the praise it deserved; nay, more—he said that Dr. Barrow preached so well, that he could willingly have been his auditor all day long. When they heard Mr. Baxter give him this high encomium, they became ashamed, confounded and speechless; for though they had a good opinion of themselves, yet they durst not pretend to be equal to Mr. Baxter. But at length, after some pause, they one after another confessed they did not hear one word of the sermon, but were carried to mislike it by his unpromising garb and mien, the reading of his prayer, and the going away of the congregation; for they would not by any means have it thought, if they had heard the sermon, they should not have concurred with the judgment of Mr. Baxter.

(Note from Dr. Walter Pope's *Life of Seth Ward* (Bp.), 1697, in the *Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, Vol. XIII., published by the Chetham Society, 1847, pp. 67, 68.)

CHRISTIANITY.

1.

It is the part of Christianity to bring out the worth of that which is apparently mean, and the dignity of that which is apparently low.

2.

Paganism held in adoration the characteristics of *man*—courage, strength, &c.; Christianity added thereto the virtues which distinguish and adorn the character of *woman*.—F. W. ROBERTSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. FULLAGAR ON UNITARIAN AND FREE CHURCHES.

SIR,

IN a late Reformer (p. 592), you notice Mr. Howorth's resignation of the pulpit at Bury, adding that he has since opened a place for free and unsectarian Christian worship. You then say, "We regret even in appearance to lose from the Unitarian denomination so good and zealous a Christian teacher as Mr. Howorth, but trust that practically there will be no wider separation between him and other Unitarian congregations, than there is between us and the ministers connected with the Domestic Missions."

In this hope, Mr. Editor, I most heartily agree, nor do I see any reason why it should not be realized; but this may arise from my not understanding *what is meant by a Free Church*, or in what it differs from an Unitarian Chapel. I have read Mr. Forster's Address, but I still feel very ignorant on this head. He says, "Human Creeds, Articles of Faith, Catechisms and Chapel Trust-deeds, have to a deplorable extent robbed men of all denominations of their noblest birthright;" and he then states that these abuses will have no place in a Free Christian Church which he and some others have formed at Camden Town. Now, without meaning to dissent from the statement of Mr. F., which has too much truth in it, I cannot admit that Unitarians have sinned or erred in the manner above mentioned. Our chapels are open to all; *our communion* is open to all; our chapel deeds are not very precise—at least, not a few *General Baptist* chapels, though nominally claimed by the Baptist body, are in the hands of *Pædo-baptists*; and our recent chapel deeds are not very binding in point of doctrine, and our Catechisms are based on the plainest teaching of Scripture; so that I do not understand how any religious instruction can be more free from mental shackles than ours is; and certain pulpit resignations or congregational splittings which we have of late years witnessed, evince that there is quite as much freedom in our congregations as is compatible with social or Christian harmony, and perhaps rather more; at all events, I have no conception how any minister can so expound the Scriptures as perfectly to satisfy the minds of a very mixed assembly. In saying this, I wish it to be borne in mind that I am writing for information. I should suppose, from the list of texts and subjects on which Mr. Forster has been preaching, and from the way in which he explains Scripture, that no one could find any difference between him and an Unitarian; and if so, why he should object to be so denominated, I do not understand. Some of our opponents have, if I mistake not, expressed themselves annoyed with us *because we have no creed to attack*: while we can batter St. Athanasius, they seem to feel that they are firing at what eludes their grasp. I must own, therefore, that, as it appears to me, this Free Church fancy is making a distinction where there is no difference; and I lament that these worthy seekers after truth will not allow us to rank them with ourselves, by so far adopting our livery as to answer to our name. But if this cannot be, sincerely do I hope, with you, Sir, that there will be no lack of mutual esteem, but that it will

be seen that we are all fervently uniting for the accomplishment of one great end. And again saying that, if I am wrong in my views, I shall be thankful for further information, I am yours very truly,

Chichester, Sept. 3, 1853.

JOHN FULLAGAR.

THE APPEAL OF THE COMMITTEE OF MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE.

SIR,

THE proceedings of the Committee of Manchester New College, according to the Address which appears in your last number, seem very extraordinary.

They alleged, as a strong ground for removal to London, the great and unnecessary expense of the College at Manchester, and they now ask for an additional income of £300 a-year (at least) as absolutely necessary for the purposes of the College in London, and for a further income of £300 a-year to enable them to remove Mr. Martineau. They maintained in the Rolls Court the right to remove the College from the North of England, on the ground that the English Presbyterian Dissenters had always established their Colleges in those localities where there were ministers of our denomination fitted to conduct them; and they have removed two ministers from Lancashire to London, and are now preparing at heavy cost to remove a third.

Can any one inform your readers what are the real objects of those who at present guide the counsels of Manchester College? The real objects and the avowed ones seem not to be the same.

Mr. Kenrick, in his celebrated letter to the *Inquirer* of November, 1852, spoke of the reputation for prudence and economy (I quote from memory) which the Manchester Committee had acquired. If these proceedings are to go on, will the Committee continue to maintain this character?

October 10, 1853.

SPECTATOR.

[We print the letter of *Spectator* with some reluctance. The question which it would raise is settled. The removal of the College to London is now an established fact, and it behoves all the friends of a learned ministry amongst us to exert themselves in its behalf. If we allow division of feeling to continue, we shall be unable to support a College in any locality. *Spectator* is wrong in imputing to the Committee of Manchester New College any argument for removal on the score of economy. That argument was used by a portion of a Special Committee, whose functions terminated some months ago. The duty of the College Committee is now arduous and responsible. They have to steer their course through a great conflict of opinions. A correspondent in the *Inquirer* blames the Appeal of the Committee for not manifesting greater warmth of zeal in favour of the proposed third Professorship. The Unitarian public will settle this question by giving or withholding the larger amount required. The officers of the institution would be unworthy of the confidence reposed in them, if they neglected prudential considerations. By avoiding extremes, they may, and we believe they will, conciliate the general support of the Unitarian body towards the College, and establish it in its new locality on a wide and perfectly safe basis.—
ED. C. R.]

INTELLIGENCE.

NEW UNITARIAN CHURCH AT HUDDERSFIELD.

The Unitarians of Huddersfield are going on with their plans with great spirit. We have in previous numbers of our Magazine given some particulars respecting their intended place of worship. The site in Fitzwilliam Street is everything that could be desired,—on rising ground, in that portion of the town near the magnificent railway station and square, which there can be little doubt will form the best part of this rapidly-improving place. The chapel is to be built by contract, under the inspection of Messrs. Bowman and Crowther (the architects of the chapels at Leeds and Gee Cross), and, so far as we can judge from the description and the illustrative drawings, will do credit to them.

The style of architecture adopted in the building is that usually denominated the Perpendicular, being the latest development of the Pointed or Gothic style in England, and which arose towards the end of the 14th century, and prevailed during the whole of the 15th and a portion of the 16th centuries. It is a style almost peculiar to this country, and is therefore, as well as on account of its inherent beauty, particularly worthy of adoption. From its stately, and, to some extent, constrained and formal character, it is perhaps better adapted than any other of the varieties of Gothic, for use in a town, where it is viewed in connection with lofty buildings in the comparatively stiff classical styles of architecture; and it has the additional advantage of admitting considerable richness of character at a comparatively small cost.

The general design of the building may be described as consisting of a nave and chancel, 68 feet long and 22 feet wide, occupying the full length of the building, both being of equal width and height throughout, the roof running continuously from one end to the other. The height from the floor to the apex of the roof inside is about 42 feet, and the height of the walls 24 feet 6 inches. The length of the building, lying north and south, at right angles to Fitzwilliam Street, is divided into five bays, the one to the north forming the chancel, where stands the communion-table surrounded by a railing.

On the west side of the nave and chancel, of equal length with them, and separated therefrom by a row of stone pillars and arches, is an aisle, 11 feet 8 inches wide, measured to the centre of the pillars, and covered by a lean-to roof. The northernmost bay of the aisle, adjoining the chancel, is partially partitioned off by a low wooden screen, for a vestry, and near this is the space for the organ. All the remaining portions of the floor are occupied by seats, which are entered from one passage running up the centre of the nave, and another in the aisle adjoining the pillars. The seats will accommodate about 300 worshipers, all upon the floor; they will face towards the communion end, and are to be without doors. It has been the desire of the Minister and the Committee from the first, to obtain the required accommodation without galleries, which, however well designed, never fail to injure the effect of any building which may contain them; and this they have been enabled to do.

The seats for the singers are to be placed on the floor at the point of junction between the nave and chancel, but arranged on each side so as to leave an unobstructed passage to the communion-table.

The pulpit will stand against the furthest pillar at the north end, and be so placed that the minister can be seen by the whole congregation, with the exception of about eight or ten.

Should the accommodation require extending at any future time, it is proposed to build an aisle on the east side of the nave, corresponding with that on the west.

Above the arches separating the nave and chancel from the aisle, is a low clevestory, pierced with small windows in the form of a quatrefoil.

All the roofs are open to the interior, the spaces between the rafters being plastered.

In the south front, facing Fitzwilliam Street, is the principal entrance to the church, opposite the centre of the width of the nave. The jambs of the doorway are enriched with shafts, with moulded caps and bases, and the arched head is elaborately moulded; the hood mould, or outermost member of the arch, forms a canopy over the doorway, and is ornamented with crockets and

terminated with a finial, the spandrel between the canopy and the point of the arch being filled with tracery. The doorway is flanked by small buttresses with crocketed pinnacles.

Above the doorway is a large window, five lights in width, divided by stone mullions. The head is filled with elaborate tracery. Over this window rises a high pitched gable, terminating the nave roof, covered with a moulded coping, and crowned with a carved stone cross, the top of which is about 50 feet above the ground at the entrance.

The portion of this front corresponding with the width of the nave is flanked by massive buttresses in three stages, above which rise, from the springing of the gable, two canopied and crocketed pinnacles, the tops of which reach to about the level of the apex of the gable.

The remaining portion of this front is formed by the end wall of the aisle, on the west side of the nave, and is in the same plane as the main part of the front just described. It contains a window of two lights, with simple stone tracery. The south-west angle of this front is strengthened by two buttresses, one on each face of the wall, and consequently set at right angles to each other: on the angle of the wall rises a small crocketed pinnacle.

The south-east angle of this front has also buttresses similarly placed, but larger.

The east and west sides of the building are divided, as the inside, into five bays, by buttresses, those on the east in three, and those on the west in two stages. In each bay is a two-light window, with tracery similar to that in the window at the south end of the aisle. The east side being the full height of the nave, while the west side is only the height of the aisle, the windows in the former, though of equal width, are of considerably greater height than those in the latter, and they are therefore, both for the sake of appearance and also for greater strength, divided in the middle of their height by a stone transom, the portion of the lights below the transom having arched heads similar to those in the window heads. The windows on the east side are also kept considerably higher above the floor than those on the west.

At the north-east angle are buttresses corresponding in size and position with those at the south-east; and the north-west angle has others, and also a pinnacle, corresponding with those at the

south-west. The aisle wall is surmounted by a low parapet.

The north front is similar in its general arrangement to the south, the main portion, forming the end of the chancel, being flanked by buttresses, and containing a large window of five lights of about equal width, but greater height than that in the south front, and divided in about the middle of its height by a transom similar to those in the east windows. The tracery in the head of this window, though corresponding in size, is of different design from that in the large south window. On the north-east angle, the pinnacle which would correspond with those on the other three angles of the nave, is replaced by two chimney shafts, of appropriate character, terminating the flues from the rooms in the basement.

The north front has also a lofty gable, crowned with a carved stone cross, corresponding with, but differing in design from, that on the south gable.

Underneath the church is a school-room, occupying the whole area of the building, with the exception of the northernmost bay, which is devoted to the purpose of a dwelling for the keeper of the building. On the west side is a sunk area, about seven feet wide, being the space between the building and the side street. The ground on the east side has been excavated to a depth below the level of the school floor, and for a sufficient area to form a spacious yard or playground for the children.

This arrangement of a school-room under a place of worship cannot but be regarded as in many respects highly objectionable, but chiefly for two reasons, one of a sanitary and the other of an æsthetic nature. It inevitably cramps the height of the school-room, and in doing so renders it not only less healthy, but also diminishes the light; as a *wide* room can only be efficiently lighted either from the ceiling or by *lofty* side windows, neither of which is possible in the case supposed.

Another great objection to this arrangement is, that it takes away the unity of effect which all buildings of this description ought to possess. If the sunk areas which are necessary for giving light to the room below completely surround the building, it has the effect of standing in a pit,—a position so glaringly opposed to good taste, as never to our knowledge to have been adopted in any instance, although such an arrangement would manifestly be to the advantage of the room itself.

To avoid this obviously bad arrangement, without losing the advantage sought to be derived from it, it has become usual, in cases where the funds will not allow of a separate building for the school, to confine the sunk areas to three of the sides where they will be least seen, and to shew on the fourth side (which is of course the *principal* front) only so much of the building as corresponds with the church or chapel, and no more. This may be all very well, so long as the building is seen directly in front; but the moment the side comes into sight, it is discovered that there is something else below, which, from a consciousness of its incongruity, has been concealed from view in the principal front. Besides this incongruity, the building has the appearance of standing partly on a high and partly on a low level, which to an eye of taste has a very unpleasing effect.

Besides, the *idea* of a room even partially under-ground is closely connected in the mind with that of a cellar; and though we may be quite aware of its real use, yet the two ideas of a place of worship on the one hand, and a cellar, or at any rate a place devoted to some secular or economical purpose, on the other, do inevitably come into disagreeable connection with each other.

These objections apply with still greater force to the keeper's dwelling, although the rooms in it are so arranged as not to appear at all from the outside.

Both the Committee and the Architect had, we believe, a very strong objection to this arrangement, and, had the funds at their disposal permitted, would probably have adopted the preferable course of having both the school and the keeper's house in separate buildings. It was only after trying all possible expedients to avoid it, that they were ultimately compelled to yield to the present plan as a matter of necessity. Their only alternative was to do this, or give up the school altogether.

The ventilation and warming of the building are intended to be effected by means of gas, and are to be combined in one system.

Between the principal or south front and Fitzwilliam Street, is a space of ground about forty feet wide, which is intended to be laid with grass and planted with shrubs, leaving a footpath in the centre leading to the principal

entrance. This ground, being considerably above the level of the street, will be approached by a flight of five steps.

The corner-stone of the church was laid on the afternoon of Monday, October 3rd. The day was, happily, clear and bright, and, notwithstanding the advanced season, the out-of-door proceedings were in every respect successful. The members of the congregation and their friends assembled at their present chapel, in Bath Buildings, early in the afternoon. Many friends from a distance were prevented from attending by previous engagements and the very short notice of the day necessarily given by their Huddersfield friends. There were, however, friends from Manchester, Stand, Dukinfield, Wakefield, Bradford, Leeds, Lydgate and Southampton. The accidental absence of many of the West-Riding ministers was regretted, and especially of Rev. Charles Wicksteed, who, to the great injury of our cause, is at present disabled from public services of every kind by illness. Soon after four o'clock, a procession was formed, headed by Mr. Mark Philips, with Mr. England, the Treasurer of the Building fund, on one side, and Mr. Bowman, the architect, on the other; next followed Mr. Schwann and the other members of the Committee; then the Rev. J. K. Montgomery, attended by Rev. Dr. Beard, Rev. E. Kell, Rev. P. Cannon, Rev. J. Cropper and Rev. R. B. Aspland. The members of the congregation, including many ladies, and attended by various distant friends, followed. The procession, which appeared of a goodly length, was brought up by the scholars and their teachers belonging to the Sunday-school. On the ground, they were joined by a large number of the townspeople of various ranks, all of whom listened with decorous interest to the proceedings, which occupied rather less than an hour after the procession had reached the site of the church. The minister of the place gave out the hymn, beginning,

"This stone to Thee in faith we lay;
We build the temple, Lord, to Thee."

Rev. J. K. Montgomery proceeded to address the company. He congratulated the congregation on having so far realized an object so much desired, and the subject of many prayers. He would cast no shadow over the pleasure of the occasion by reference to the difficulties and struggles through which

they had passed, or to the remaining clouds that might seem to darken their horizon. The occasion was to him one of interest intenser than he dare venture to express. They were met to ask the Divine blessing on their undertaking from its very commencement; and let them remember, that "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." They desired thus from its foundation to gather around their house of prayer religious sympathies and associations. Time was, such assembling of themselves together would be an illegal act, and at the peril of imprisonment or worse consequences, and when their "conventicles," if built at all, had to be built in out-of-the-way localities, the lanes and alleys of their towns, and guarded against intrusion of the civil magistrate. Let them be thankful that they live in happier times, when religious liberty was better understood; and when, as then, they could assemble in face of high heaven and their fellow-men, and in a commanding locality, to erect a new church wherein to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, "none daring to molest." The building whose corner-stone they were met to lay, was to be dedicated to the noblest of purposes,—the religious education of the young in its schools, and in the church, the worship of the only living and true God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to their simple, rational, scriptural views of Christianity. It was to be dedicated to freedom of thought—to the development of their highest nature, in the direction of truth, virtue, piety; dedicated to the diffusion of the benign and holy religion of the blessed Jesus, and the culture of the Christian spirit and the Christian life, of which himself was the living illustration. Not in mere antagonism to, but rather in fraternity with, churches around them, did they raise their house of prayer. He would neither magnify nor undervalue their differences with their fellow-christians; yet were they such as to constrain to separation for *purposes of worship*, which, in his view, required a certain agreement as to its *object and character* greater than existed between themselves and surrounding churches. Whilst, however, standing fast in their Christian liberty, they yet accorded to all that liberty which they claimed for themselves, and sought ever to maintain towards all that charity which thinketh no evil, striving to keep

unity of spirit in the bond of peace. However divergent their path of doctrine, he yet believed that the end aimed at by all was one, and felt that what was common to all churches,—the Christian virtue, holiness and piety, the love of God and man inculcated by our holy religion,—was bond strong enough to unite them, in love and unity of spirit, to all true Christian churches, whose discipleship to Jesus was evidenced by the simple test set forth by himself,—obedience to his teachings, love of God and one another. He urged that, whilst rearing that outward temple, they should aim to build up unto God a holier sanctuary in their own hearts, from whose altar there might be continually ascending the incense of devout affections, and that living sacrifice of soul and body, unto God an offering of sweet-smelling savour;—commending them to let the simplicity, beauty, gracefulness of their outward church, be the symbol of that simplicity, beauty, gracefulness of Christian character, which each one should strive to form within himself by the ministrations of the outward sanctuary; and the cross surmounting their edifice be to them the symbol of that self-sacrifice, death-enduring love and devotedness to God and duty, alone fitting them for that heaven, whither it directed their aspirations as to their upturned gaze it stood reflected against the sky. Without further detaining them, he would call upon the Rev. Dr. Beard to offer up the prayer of dedication; not that he believed that they should thereby make holier the walls they were about to raise, or in aught consecrate the ground whereon their church would stand; for every ground, he believed, was holy, where prayer is offered and God is worshiped by his children. "The woods were God's first temples." They sought rather to consecrate in their hearts the edifice they were about to raise—to set it apart in their affections, as devoted to the holiest of purposes, around which all their most spiritual, holiest, devoutest sympathies, and those of children's children, were to be henceforth gathering with increasing power and increasing purity and depth of love and veneration.

Rev. Dr. Beard then offered the prayer of dedication amidst the perfect stillness of the now large crowd of spectators.

Mr. W. P. England, the Treasurer of the Building fund, addressing Mr.

Philips, said he had been deputed to present to him, for the purpose of enclosing in the cavity of the stone, certain documents explanatory of the circumstances attending the erection of their church. Those documents possibly might not be seen again for some hundreds of years, and might hereafter be regarded with curiosity and interest. The papers, hermetically sealed in glass, were then placed by Mr. Philips in the prepared cavity. They contained the newspapers of Huddersfield and the *Inquirer* of the previous Saturday, a list of subscribers to the church, a brief history of its rise and early progress, and a list of the persons taking a principal part in the ceremony of the day. The historical document stated that the congregation was formed in Huddersfield in 1846, under the ministry of the Rev. George Heap Stanley, now minister-elect of the Unitarian church, Sydney, New South Wales; and that the site was granted by Sir J. W. Ramsden, Bart., M.P., at one half the rent-charge usual in that locality.

Mr. Ibbetson, as Treasurer of the congregation, then presented to Mr. Philips an elegant silver trowel, having a suitable inscription, and said it was a pleasant task to offer him that trowel for the performance of the duty which he had so kindly undertaken in laying the corner-stone of their church. It was to be a church for Unitarian worship; and in the present state of the religious world, an Unitarian must be an intelligent and a bold man, and he should also be one who united with piety to the One True God, love to all the children of a common Father.

On receiving the trowel, Mr. Mark Philips addressed the assembly in nearly the following words: "I beg to thank you and the members of this Christian church for the elegant gift which you have just placed in my hands, and to assure you that the work which you have assigned to me on this occasion, is one thoroughly congenial to my feelings. You, Sir, have justly described what the position of Unitarians is, and what their views and feelings ought to be. If men are consistent Unitarians, they must not only dare to inquire and think for themselves, but, when they have so inquired and found what they believe to be truth, they must have the courage to act upon their convictions. I, for one, can say, that the religious opinions which I have deliberately formed give me unalloyed satisfaction. Those opinions are in perfect conso-

nance with the views already expressed by those who have so ably taken part in these interesting proceedings. It is therefore with feelings of pleasure that I shall presently proceed to that mechanical part of the work which you have this day allotted to me—the laying of the corner-stone of your church. I cannot, on an occasion like this, address myself to Christian men, residing in a populous manufacturing district, without calling upon them, as owners of property and as employers of labour, to reflect on the duties which devolve upon them, and upon the example which it behoves them to set. I would exhort them to remember that there are higher and nobler things to be secured than the things of this world; I would entreat them not to lose sight of what is required from them in the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed. The tendency of all manufacturing and commercial enterprise is to give a great start to population. All property has its duties, and most responsible are the duties of our merchants and manufacturers. As an association of Christians, it is your duty to recruit your moral strength from time to time by taking counsel one with another, and listening to the instructions of those who can impart to you the highest knowledge; also to practise habitual freedom of inquiry. Let there be no interference with the rights of conscience; here let there be perfect liberty. Your minister, while he practises perfect freedom himself, will urge you all to read the Scriptures and judge for yourselves—to bring every opinion and doctrine to the test of Scripture; and when you are satisfied in your minds that you have found the truth, then by all becoming means shew to the world what it is you believe. I have been a Dissenter from my youth upon conviction. Let no one suppose that those who went before me (whose early training was in the Church of England, but who from inquiry embraced the principles of Dissent) ever wished to warp my judgment or endeavoured to make me adopt opinions which I did not receive as true. On the contrary, the principles which I now advocate, and which I would commend to your regard, are those which I have myself embraced from the conviction that they are right, and now cling to from the experience of their value. My religious opinions are to my mind day by day a comfort and a consolation; and should your lives be

spared to reach my time of life, you will know the value of religion.—I have now to consider what is the intended purpose of the building of which we are about to place the corner-stone; and it is a matter of perfect satisfaction when I think of what will be the use to which it will, by generation after generation, be put. If there be one place more than another in the world in which men meet on terms of perfect equality, it is surely in the house of God. That which will be taught within these walls is that on which will depend your immortal welfare and salvation. Though I may be thought to be entering on topics which belong more properly to your minister, permit me to say that it is impossible for a man to live to my time of life without having these solemn convictions brought home to him. I trust and believe that this church, when completed, will be dedicated to the pure worship of God; that here you will for many years meet in peace to receive religious instruction; here, no doubt, many marriages will be solemnized; here parents will bring their children for baptism; here the last token of earthly respect will be paid to departed worth, and here the sorrowing heart will receive consolation. It will be matter of deep satisfaction to me, if I am permitted to know that the results of this your undertaking are commensurate with your honest and unexaggerated expectations. Let me ask you to pay becoming respect to your minister. Listen to his advice with respect. Be cordially united amongst yourselves. Differences of opinion there may and will be, but let them be as few as possible. If as a Christian community you are knit together in the bond of peace, you will be objects of respect to those who may differ most widely from you, and you may venture to hope that God will smile upon you. I heartily wish all possible success. I wish to your minister a long connection with an earnest and united people. I wish that it may be your happiness to exemplify in your lives the noble principles of your faith, and so to let your light shine before men that they may say, 'Whatever differences of faith may exist between them and us, these men at least are Christians.' I fear I have trespassed too long upon your attention; but when a man's feelings are excited in favour of a valuable object, he is liable to say more than he intended. I congratulate you that this building has been so auspiciously commenced.

Long may this stone remain in the position in which we are about to place it; and if ever it is removed, may it be for the purpose of raising a much larger edifice in its place!"

The address of Mr. Philips was delivered with a depth of feeling which will not soon be forgotten, and made a very strong impression on the hearers, who were markedly silent during his speech. He then proceeded to lay the stone with the usual forms, and handled the trowel and mallet with the ease of a true and accepted mason.

Rev. R. Brook Aspland, at the request of the Committee, proceeded to address the people, and said, in consideration of their comfort, he would not detain them much longer in the open air, but he wished to add his congratulations on the interesting occasion which had brought them together, and on the arrival at this important stage towards the completion of their laudable ambition as a Christian church. They had now, with happy omens, laid the corner-stone: it was his prayer that the building might be raised to its roof-tree without a single accident to the workmen engaged upon it. When completed, it was his further prayer that generation after generation of worshippers might assemble within its wall, and derive all the instruction, peace and joy, which belong to pure religion. He was glad to see that the occasion had assembled many of the neighbours and friends of other religious denominations, as well as the members of the Huddersfield Unitarian church. There were grounds on which he could claim their sympathy with the undertaking now begun. All might feel satisfaction and sympathy when they saw a house raised in faith and charity for the worship of God. He could assure them that they were assembled, not for a political, not for a philosophical, but for a strictly religious and Christian purpose. He and those with whom he was that day acting valued Unitarianism, not as a system of abstract philosophical truth, but as the doctrine of the gospel. He believed that it was most important for the interests of the whole Christian world that Unitarianism should be preached and generally understood; that it should be possible for at least one sect to state its faith, and its whole faith, in the simple but expressive words of scripture, taken in their natural and obvious sense; and that Christianity should be presented to the intelligence of the age freed from

needless mystery, and shewn to be in alliance with, not subversive of, man's cultivated reason. Unitarians were allies, not enemies, of other Christian sects. They had rendered not unimportant service to Christian literature, and from their writers had proceeded some of the soundest and most impregnable defences of the common Christianity, which all received and prized. At present they were a very small body; but this was no legitimate ground of exception against the disciples of that Master, all of whose followers once met in an upper room in Jerusalem. Small as the number of professed Unitarians was, it had been much smaller. At the beginning of the present century, there were probably not more than fifty congregations in England that would have accepted the name Unitarian. Now there were in England about two hundred; and in America (according to a very recent statement which had fallen under his notice) there were about three thousand congregations which, if not all nominally, were substantially Unitarian. If this progress had been achieved in times comparatively dark and intolerant, during a portion of which the law, as well as public opinion, had been against them, what might they not anticipate as the result of faithful labours hereafter! Now they stood with all the shackles which encumbered their ancestors struck from their limbs; now they were free men able to speak to free men the words of truth and love, none daring to make them afraid. With the light and increasing liberality which were the fruits of education,—with all the aids which a free press could give them,—and with the sympathies of masses of the people now for the first time in favour of religious reformation,—the field of action open to Unitarians was full of promise. He concluded with expressing an earnest wish that the little church at Huddersfield, in common with their Unitarian brethren of other places, might fight the good fight of faith, and win many bloodless victories in the name of the God of truth and love.

Another hymn, given out by Rev. John Cropper, of Stand, was then sung; and the proceedings on the ground were closed by Rev. E. Kell, of Southampton, with a solemn prayer and benediction.

At the close of the proceedings, the minister and his congregation and friends again formed themselves into a procession and returned to the chapel

in Bath Buildings, where they partook of tea. They were here joined by Rev. J. H. Ryland, who had been prevented attending the previous proceedings by an important educational meeting in Leeds. The chair was taken by Rev. J. K. Montgomery; and by him, Mr. Philips, Mr. Hornblower, Dr. Beard, Mr. England, Rev. Edmund Kell, Rev. R. B. Aspland, Rev. J. Cropper, Rev. J. H. Ryland and others, various addresses were given, which breathed a fine healthy spirit, combining Christian charity with Unitarian zeal. We much regret that we cannot find space for the report of the meeting. In the course of the evening, the Chairman announced that Mr. Philips had increased his subscription to the Building fund from £10 to £50. One of the strangers present, after paying a tribute to the growing importance and architectural magnificence of the new town of Huddersfield, dwelt on the propriety of the congregation carrying out their building plan in its integrity, and rearing a church not unworthy of their cause, when viewed in comparison with the handsome buildings in its vicinity.

SYSTEMATIC RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Judicious and intelligent religious instructors must be well aware of the want of suitable manuals for communicating systematic religious instruction to vestry and Sunday-school classes. An effort has just been commenced in Manchester and its vicinity to provide, by means of organization and co-operation, this long-felt want. The origination of the plan is, we believe, mainly owing to Rev. John Wright, now of Macclesfield, and the minister-elect of Bury, whose zeal and practical skill in religious education have been evinced in several ways. With the aid of Rev. J. J. Tayler, Dr. Beard, Rev. T. E. Poynting, Rev. Charles Beard, Rev. W. Gaskell and others, a Society has been formed, the object of which is, "to produce a series of manuals, which, besides furnishing instructions in the principles and practice of religion, shall also afford directions and aids for the use, not only of the manuals themselves, but also of the books of Scripture; the whole course being distributed into a number of sections. Such a course will be intended to furnish rather a guide for the mind of the teacher, than matter to be literally committed to memory by the young. It

will also point out the order in which the different subjects of instruction can with most advantage be successively taken up. Previous to each lesson, the Teacher should make himself thoroughly acquainted with the matter which is to be the subject of it, not merely as contained in the book itself, but as digested in his own reflections, or enriched by his own reading and inquiry, for pursuing which, it is intended that sufficient references to the best sources of information should be given. So that instead of having questions technically framed, to be put in the same form in every instance, the Teacher will be assisted to adapt his questions specially, upon the matter before him, to the disposition, feeling, knowledge and capacity of the catechumen. The exercise should not be one of simple memory, which may be conducted without any effort or interest on the part of the Teacher, or any improvement or advantage to the child; but the living, active heart and mind of the one should be brought to bear on the living sympathy and susceptibility of the other. For the object of such a course is not exclusively, or even principally, to impart knowledge, but to awaken sentiment and cultivate belief—to educate in fact a religious frame and temper of mind—and to furnish such knowledge as can be embraced by the memory, mainly as a foundation of clear and positive ideas for the support and nutriment of the higher spiritual principles.

"In such a series of works, it is thought desirable to keep as much as possible to what is now universally admitted by writers of the highest authority, and to exclude doubtful and controverted matter. Many even of our recent elementary works use little discrimination in this respect, and are quite below the present standard of religious and Biblical knowledge. They overstate their case; and being written too much in the spirit of advocacy, they sow the seeds of future doubt. It is well that young people should have as little as possible to unlearn, when they begin to read and think for themselves; for the process of unlearning what was learned in childhood and youth, weakens for the time the authority even of fundamental truths. Happily the things that are of the most importance, are the most certain, and the least exposed to the questionings of different schools and sects; such as the truths of a living God, a providence, a moral government, a future life, the

great evil and misery of sin, the indispensableness of a pure and loving heart and a holy life to inward peace and the Divine blessing; the great historical facts and the great monotheistic doctrines of the Old and New Testaments; the mission, teaching, character and fate of Jesus Christ. These appear to be the matters which should be comprised within the range of catechetical instruction; speculation and controversy belong to a riper age: and if these matters be from the first intimately associated with deep religious feeling, with genuine reverence and tenderness of mind, with a strong sense of their bearing on human conduct and happiness, and the true interpretation of life, the most effectual provision will be made for encountering safely, and solving practically, at a more advanced period, the more difficult questions which will probably suggest themselves sooner or later to all thoughtful and inquisitive minds, but which childhood and youth should be taught to regard it as their duty reverentially to postpone till they have knowledge enough, and mental strength and security enough, to find their way through them, and turn them to some practical use."

A meeting of the promoters of the plan was held on Thursday, Sept. 22, at Cross-Street chapel-rooms, Manchester. The chair was taken by S. D. Darbishire, Esq. There were present, in addition to the gentlemen already named, C. J. Darbishire, Esq., of Rivington; Rev. Rees Lloyd, of Belper; Rev. James Bayley, of Stockport; Mr. Glossop and Mr. Freestone, of Manchester; Mr. Robert D. Darbishire; and Rev. R. B. Aspland. The plan proposed to the meeting was to form a Society to raise a sum of not less than £300, for the purpose of publishing a series of nine progressive manuals, each composed by an author or authors selected by the executive Committee. The first resolution was proposed by Rev. Dr. Beard, and recognized the necessity of establishing an Association for the publication of a series of books containing systematic religious instruction. The second resolution, proposed by Rev. R. L. Lloyd, appointed the officers of the Society: Rev. John Wright, Secretary; S. D. Darbishire, Esq., President; J. Pemberton Heywood, Esq., Treasurer; also a large general and a smaller executive Committee. The third resolution, pledging the meeting to assist in raising the re-

quired fund, was proposed by Rev. R. B. Aspland. All the proceedings were characterized by a cordial and unanimous spirit, and a subscription was begun at once in aid of the proposed fund.

TESTIMONIAL OF ESTEEM TO THE REV.
EDMUND KELL.

A very beautiful silver salver, weighing sixty ounces, was lately presented to the Rev. Edmund Kell at Southampton, as a testimonial of affection and esteem, by William Mortimer, Esq. (senior Trustee of the chapel at Newport), and John Cooke, Esq., who had been appointed a deputation for that purpose, when Mr. Cooke addressed the friends present with much emotion in the following words :

“My Christian friends,—I am confident you will believe me when I assure you that it is with no common degree of pleasure, though mingled with some regret, that I address you on the present occasion;—with regret that our friend Mr. Kell should have been induced, from any circumstance connected with the congregation of Newport, to resign his pastoral charge; but with peculiar pleasure in being called upon to complete our object (at first suggested by one of the oldest friends now present, and supported by others whom we are requested to represent), by offering this testimonial, as expressive of our united gratitude, respect and esteem for his valuable services during the long period of thirty years,—a period in which, not only as individuals, but as members of the same community, we have been benefited by the constant energy of his mind and the purity of his principles, on occasions not to be enumerated without considerable emotion, and when, especially in our family relations, he has been our comforter and spiritual instructor. If it be asked why we have united in presenting this memorial to such a friend, I reply in the words of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, it is because we believe that, after his example, he ‘has not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God;’ that he has not been burdensome to us, and that he has been ‘willing to spend and to be spent’ for us; in a word, that we have ‘esteemed him very highly for his works’ sake.’ Assembled as we are under his hospitable roof, addressing him in the fullest confidence of friendship, I feel it unnecessary to say anything further than to express a wish that his life may be long spared to dif-

fuse all and greater good than we have experienced, in a soil congenial to his feelings, amongst a circle who will fully appreciate and give renewed efficacy to his labours; and O, if I might express but one wish more, before reading the inscription engraven on the testimonial, it would be that his beloved wife, pre-eminently the benefactress of the young of our congregation, the founder and unwearied supporter of some of our societies for their temporal and spiritual welfare, may alike experience with him the joys of earth, and finally the perpetual bliss of heaven. With these few words, I have now the extreme pleasure of presenting to you, my dear friend, in the name of the subscribers, this testimonial of their unfeigned respect and esteem, the inscription on which I will now read to you :

“Presented to the Rev. EDMUND KELL, M.A., F.S.A., by some of his Friends belonging to the Unitarian Congregation, Newport, Isle of Wight, July, 1853, as a Testimonial of their sincere respect and esteem for his earnest zeal in the discharge of his Pastoral Office during a period of Thirty Years.”

Mr. Kell, in acknowledging the kindness of his friends, said,—“My fellow-Christians, I feel truly gratified by the handsome testimonial of affection and esteem presented by my attached friends of the Unitarian congregation at Newport, and for the kind manner in which you have personally conveyed it. The value of the testimonial, tasteful and costly as it is, and evincing the liberality of the donors, is enhanced by considerations which far outweigh the price of silver or gold; for it speaks of faithful love. It carries my thoughts back to days when as a young man from College, and with the fresh hopes of ministerial usefulness, I settled among you; and to those fathers of our Israel who then cordially welcomed me, and who ever kindly appreciated and supported me in my ministerial efforts. It reminds me of many days of arduous duty in instructing the young, counselling the unwary, comforting the sorrowing and smoothing the bed of death, on which memory loves to linger, as among the purest sources of consolation. It speaks, too, of seasons when I have joined the young and the old, the rich and the poor, in meetings of innocent festivity, and endeavoured to brighten our progress Zionwards by mutual sympathy and friendly co-ope-

ration. And the kindliness which it marks will encourage me to pursue that course of conduct which has gained for me your graven expression of Christian esteem. I have studied throughout my whole course to live in harmony with all; and though the ministerial office necessarily at times requires the preacher of righteousness to use the voice of reproof, you, I know, will bear witness that it has ever been my aim 'to speak the truth in love.' Permit me to give vent to the overflowings of my full heart on this occasion, by saying to you that lengthened years have deepened my sense of the value of the Gospel of Jesus. Thoughts of its vast importance to our spiritual growth, to every interest both for time and eternity, have crowded upon me, and though it may be inefficiently (for with the apostle I have often been ready to exclaim, 'Who is sufficient for these things!'), yet I have desired to labour more assiduously in the service of my flock, and the general promotion of holiness, and of what we esteem 'the truth as it is in Jesus.' For the sacred cause of truth and righteousness, I trust still to spend the remainder of my life, in, I prayerfully hope, more zealous efforts. In my new charge, which is not altogether to me an untried scene of Christian effort, to be cheered by those who have ever supported me in my past ministry, and to hope that their prayers rise up for me at a throne of grace, will be an unspeakable consolation; to maintain their unvaried friendship, an abiding source of comfort. I cannot now have the pleasure of meeting each one of the friends who have so generously joined in shewing their affection to me. I must therefore ask you to convey to them the assurance of my gratitude, esteem and friendship. Say to them, too, that, though new claims may now demand my time, I shall never forget to pray for their spiritual welfare, and shall rejoice to promote their best interests. May we meet on that celestial shore where people and pastor who have faithfully discharged their duty shall never more be called to part! In concluding, I must express my warmest thanks to Mr. Cooke for his gratifying expressions towards Mrs. Kell, who has cordially co-operated with me in all my ministerial efforts, and who has been indeed 'unwearied' in her devotion to the interests of 'Friendly Visiting' and 'Provident Societies,' and to the Sunday Schools."

William Mortimer, Esq., then closed this interesting presentation by feelingly observing that he fully concurred in every expression that had fallen from his friend Mr. Cooke, which so well conveyed the opinions of the friends who had subscribed to the testimonial. He had only to add the great gratification he had experienced in witnessing the cordial approbation of the inhabitants of Newport generally, expressive of their respect for Mr. Kell.

The Hampshire Independent newspaper, in noticing the presentation of the above testimonial, remarks: "The inscription, a copy of which we append, so fully describes the reasons which have induced the subscription, that we have no need to add to it any eulogium of our own in honour of a gentleman who was so universally respected."

DOMESTIC MISSION CHAPEL AT MILES
PLATTING, MANCHESTER.

For many years past the services in connection with the Manchester Domestic Mission have been conducted in a room at Miles Platting. Great inconvenience has been felt, in consequence of the room in which worship was conducted on Sundays, being used on the other six days of the week for secular purposes. The Unitarians of Manchester therefore determined to build a chapel for their Mission, aided by munificent donations from Martin Schunck, Esq., the late Salis Schwabe, Esq., and other friends. A plot of ground was selected, with frontage to the Rochdale Road, about one mile beyond Swan Street. The foundation-stone of the new chapel was laid some months back; and it was opened for divine worship by three services on Sunday, Oct. 16th. Three sermons were preached on the occasion; those in the morning and afternoon by the Rev. Francis Bishop, domestic missionary, of Liverpool; and that in the evening by the Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., of Manchester. The congregations were large at each service, and in the evening the chapel was filled to overflowing, and there was no room for the Sunday scholars, and many persons went away unable to obtain seats. The collections amounted to upwards of £30. On Monday evening, October 17, there was a tea-party in the school-room beneath the chapel; about 200 ladies and gentlemen were present. The chair was occupied by Mr. Eddowes Bowman, M.A.; and the

other speakers were the Revds. F. Bishop, Wm. Gaskell, Dr. Beard, John Wright, J. Layhe, domestic missionary; and Messrs. J. O. Curtis, H. Rawson and H. Fletcher. During the evening several choruses and hymns were sung by the chapel choir. The chapel (which has been built from the plans of Messrs. Bowman and Crowther, architects, of Manchester) is a neat structure of brick. The door is approached by a flight of steps, and opens into a vestibule, from which there are doors into the vestry and to the gallery stairs. The entrance into the chapel from the vestibule is hung with crimson curtains, the open benches reaching from the aisle to the wall on either side. The raised place for the communion-table is raised one step above the chapel, and the table is covered with a crimson cloth. The pulpit is in the corner of the chapel, by the side of the communion rails. The gallery, which extends over the vestibule, contains an harmonium, and will be usually occupied by the choir and Sunday scholars. The roof of the chapel is open, and the stained-oak rafters give a warmth to the upper part of the building which would otherwise be wanting. The chapel is not large, but will accommodate from 250 to 300 persons. Service will be regularly conducted in this new chapel, which is situated in a densely-populated and poor district, by the Rev. John Layhe, the domestic missionary.—*Manchester Guardian*.

BOLTON DISTRICT UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The autumn meeting of this Association was held at Bolton on the 13th of October, and a little additional interest was attached to it from its being understood to be the last occasion on which there would be such a gathering in the old chapel in Bank Street, arrangements being in progress to replace that ancient building with a larger and more commodious edifice. The attendance of visitors from almost all parts of the district was unusually numerous, although, owing to several unfavourable circumstances, the number of ministers present was rather less. The service, which is an afternoon one, was conducted by Rev. C. B. Hubbard and Rev. M. C. Frankland. The latter gentleman preached an excellent sermon from Matthew xxv. 21. There being no business to occupy the members after the conclusion of the chapel

services, they adjourned to the Temperance Hall, where tea was provided for the party, which amounted to considerably more than two hundred. In this spacious building the appearance of the assembly was exceedingly interesting, affording as it did an opportunity, both during tea and in the interval which elapsed before the subsequent proceedings commenced, for social chat and friendly intercourse. One of the grand advantages of these re-unions consists in the sociality and friendships which they promote among the members of distant congregations.

As soon as this social repast was concluded, the Rev. F. Baker took the chair. After some introductory remarks, he took a rapid glance at the present state of the Christian world both abroad and at home, and then called attention to the more immediate objects of the meeting.—Robert Heywood, Esq., as Treasurer, added some observations on the same topic.—Rev. John Ragland dwelt at some length on the duty of ministers to be faithful and earnest in their work.—Rev. M. C. Frankland recommended increased attention to our Sunday-schools, as a field of usefulness to the minister only inferior to that of his congregational labours.—C. J. Darbishire, Esq., adverted in pointed terms to the freedom which ought to be cherished in our churches, and to actuate the body, both ministers and laymen. He thought that religion, no more than science, could be stationary. It ought to be continually making progress, developing truths unseen or unfelt before. He fancied that he saw even amongst ourselves a jealousy of new movements.—Rev. F. Knowles, on the other hand, held Christianity to be a positive principle, agreeably to the text—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." He admitted that corruptions must be removed, that the simple truths of Revelation must be discovered, but that Religion, as made known in Scripture, was permanent and immutable.—Rev. James Whitehead, in addressing the meeting on the sentiment of Civil and Religious Liberty, alluded to several of its eminent advocates, and from their eloquence and consistency urged its claims on all who valued their rights and privileges. The exclusion of the Jews from Parliament and from civil rights was repeatedly adverted to as one of the remaining blots on our Statute-book.—Rev. W. Probert delivered a beautiful speech,

descriptive and recommendatory of a pure faith and the duties which it imposed.

The intervals between the speeches were enlivened by a variety of musical pieces, sung by the chapel choir, with considerable taste and execution.

The Secretary announced that the spring meeting of the Association would take place at Park Lane on the last Thursday in April in the ensuing year.

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY HALL.

The first session of the College in University Hall opened on Friday, October 14, by the delivery of an Inaugural Address by Rev. J. J. Tayler, the Principal. Of this admirable address, our readers are enabled to judge for themselves. Amongst those present were Dr. William Carpenter, the Principal of University Hall, and nearly all the members of the Council; Rev. Thos. Madge, Rev. E. Tagart, and we believe all the other Unitarian ministers resident in and about the metropolis; Rev. G. V. Smith, the Theological Professor; Rev. E. Kell, Southampton; Rev. John Kenrick, one of the Visitors of Manchester New College; Mark Philips, Esq., R. N. Philips, Esq., Robert Worthington, Esq., S. D. Darbishire, Esq., the students of both the College and the Hall, and many ladies. The library is not yet arranged. The shelves and other fittings are now being put up according to a design of Horace Field, Esq., the architect. The effect of the whole, when filled with the two valuable libraries removed from Manchester, will be very good. It is most satisfactory to us to know that both the College and the Hall commence their united career with brighter prospects than either institution has of late enjoyed. The number of students of the College is increased, and there are other candidates for admission when the Committee obtain the necessary funds. Considering the very limited number of ministers, and the great demand for ministerial service by Unitarian congregations in various parts of England,—we believe exceeding any previous experience,—we cannot doubt that what is required will be speedily supplied.—Nearly all the rooms of the Hall are now occupied.

THE MOSLEY SCHOOLS.

This institution, recently established by the Christian Brethren, thrives very

satisfactorily. The rooms are every Sunday crowded with more than 800 scholars, and, if there were the means of accommodating them, a much larger number would be taught. On the evening of Saturday, Oct. 15th, a public tea-party was held, at which between 500 and 600 persons were present. The object of the party was to originate a Library for the use of the scholars and teachers. The chair was taken by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, who encouraged his Mosley friends in their undertaking by the promise of his counsel and a donation of books. The evening was diversified by speeches, recitations, and some beautiful music. On the following evening, an appropriate and interesting lecture was delivered in the chapel to a large congregation by Rev. Dr. Beard, and a collection was made in behalf of the proposed Library. If any of our Unitarian friends have books which they are disposed to give to this very useful school, they will be gratefully received on behalf of the Mosley friends, by Rev. R. B. Aspland, Dukinfield, Ashton-under-Lyne.

MINISTERS' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

The first annual general meeting of this Society was held in the vestry of the New meeting-house, Birmingham, on Wednesday, October 26th, at one o'clock. There was a numerous attendance. The chair was taken by Samuel Smith, Esq.

Rev. E. Higginson had previously given notice of his intention to propose the following alterations in the constitution of the Society:—1. To call the *Beneficiary* Members *Participant* Members. 2. To allow three grades of subscription, of one, two and three guineas per annum, with proportionate advantages accruing. 3. To give each Participant Member a *claim* upon the fund, under the circumstances contemplated, leaving to the Committee the disposal of any surplus in the way of benefaction or gratuity.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read, the Secretary, F. Russell, Esq., read the Committee's report for the past year. It stated that 119 replies of approval had been sent by ministers in Great Britain to a circular issued by the Secretary; that a deputation had visited the South of England with good success; that a meeting had been held in London at the time of the Unitarian Association; and that a Sub-committee had prepared the re-arranged rules for

this meeting to consider.—The Treasurer's account shewed £2406. 3s. in hand on account of the general fund to Sept. 30, and £769. 19s. 5d. on account of the annual income. The latter amount was ordered to be added to the fund.

Rev. E. Higginson moved, and Rev. B. Carpenter, of Nottingham, seconded, the following resolution: "That the constitution of the Society shall be based upon the principle of giving each Beneficiary (or Participant) Member a recognized claim on the Society's funds, on his own part in case of incapacitation, and on the part of his representatives in case of his death; which claim it shall be optional with him and them to exercise or waive according to their own estimate of their own circumstances;—the rate of such claim to be settled from time to time by the annual meetings, so as never to exceed the average income of the three preceding years,—the Committee to have the power of voting any part of the surplus income in aid of cases of special need." The resolution was negatived by seven to twenty.

Mr. Higginson then withdrew his other proposed alterations of the rules, and the rules as proposed by the Committee were adopted, with verbal or slight alterations.

DEPARTED UNITARIAN WORTHIES.

We have observed with regret a disposition in some youthful speakers and writers to treat with indifference, almost approaching to contempt, the labours and sufferings of Unitarians of a past age. This is a very spurious kind of liberality. Unitarians ought to be superior to that narrow bigotry which can see neither truth nor merit, except opinions and actions run in precisely the channel marked out or approved by themselves. Well-informed Unitarians of the modern philosophical school, are the last to depreciate the labours of their predecessors, whether of the past or the present century, who chiefly devoted their strength to the elucidation of scripture. We are glad to enrich our pages with a just and able letter, printed in a recent No. of the *Inquirer*, in vindication of two honoured Unitarian names.

SIR,—In a late number of the *Inquirer*, a letter from a young minister was inserted, which in one paragraph reflects on the reputation of Priestley and Belsham. Now, although I am far from

professing to pin my faith on those eminent divines, and on some points decidedly differ from them both, I should be sorry to think with your correspondent that Priestley might not have been a great chemist if living in the present age, and that perhaps Belsham might be unknown. I trust your young correspondent will not be displeased if I express an opinion, perhaps that of the majority of your readers, that his supposition indicates a partial acquaintance with the lives and writings of those distinguished men; for that they did excite the attention of no ordinary minds, is a fact which he cannot call into question. But where is the vast superiority of the present generation in regard to theology over the two preceding ones? That was the period of Hume and Gibbon, whose attacks on the foundations of Christianity exceeded in power those of all the present unbelievers put together. But the works of Priestley and Belsham contain ingenious, forcible and ample refutations of the arguments of both. Belsham, if he lived in the present day, would doubtless have turned his powerful artillery against those who now attack Christianity, and would have awed into silence, as he did in his day, the bishops who thought fit to calumniate the Unitarian doctrine and its professors. But these have learned a better lesson; and to those who have preceded us are we indebted for the calm in that quarter which we, their successors, enjoy. Mr. Belsham's talent for condensation, his power of luminous, perspicuous, and even elegant expression, as well as deep devotional feeling, pervade his writings generally. Perhaps those qualities are most remarkable in his "Evidences" and the two volumes of Sermons. Indeed, I am at a loss to think of any English sermons of the last or present generation that can be said to equal, in these respects, Mr. Belsham's. Will your young correspondent be pleased to suggest any? I might proceed at greater length, but wish not to be tedious.

A word on Priestley as a chemist. This illustrious man has a niche in the annals of chemistry which will make him known for centuries to come. Not being myself a chemist, I wish to speak with diffidence, and prefer citing the judgment of a Professor in the present day, whom I suppose your correspondent will allow to be a great chemist. At the Centenary of Priestley's birth, in the year 1833, when the scientific men assembled in London to do honour to Priestley as a philosopher, and vied with each other in his praise, Professor Faraday exceeded all his bre-

thren in lauding the originality of Priestley, and pointing out as his distinguishing merit, that he did not go in the steps of his predecessors, but struck out for himself an entirely new path. Perhaps these qualities might have secured him some notoriety even in the present day. Faraday happily still survives, and would no doubt, on a proper occasion, still bear his voluntary and fearless testimony to Priestley in this respect.

I beg your correspondent's pardon for carrying him so far back into antiquity, or I might tell your readers of the exalted praise conferred on Priestley by Dr. Thos. Thomson, of Glasgow, who has lately finished his career. I know that he sympathized with Priestley both in chemistry and theology.

A gentleman who was present at the Centenary whispered into my ear, as the meeting closed, "The time may come when as large a number may meet to celebrate Priestley's merit as a Theologian."

SEXAGENARIUS.

CALVINISM AND INSANITY.

In the Report of the Lunatic Asylum at Rainhill, in the county of Lancaster, just issued to the magistrates of that county, and signed by Thomas Eccleston, Surgeon Superintendent, a remarkable statement is made on the subject of Calvinism and its injuriousness to sanity.

"The cause of mental disease which ranks only second in potency and fre-

quency to drunkenness, is perverted ideas on religion. The observations of Dr. Halloran, made in the Cork Lunatic Asylum, entirely coincide with my own experience. This physician remarked, that among his patients, although Catholics were in proportion to Protestants as ten to one, no instance occurred of mental derangement among the former from exalted religious opinions, while several instances of insanity thus induced took place among the Protestants. I desire to guard myself from being understood to express any opinion, either favourable or adverse, to the theological doctrines of the Calvinists. I venture to express no such opinion, but limit myself strictly to the medical question of the influence these peculiar doctrines exert in the production of insanity. According to my own experience, all cases deserving the name of religious insanity are, with rare exceptions, the result of the Calvinistic theology. This opinion is fully supported by many authors of deservedly high reputation, and has recently received a strong confirmation from the statistical tables of Dr. Hübertz on the condition of the insane in the kingdom of Denmark, published in the *Annales Medico-psychologiques*. Dr. Hübertz shews that in every 1000 of the general population, which is Lutheran, only 2.10 are insane; while in every 1000 professing the Calvinistic creed, no less than 9.16 are insane. The wards of this institution have contained examples, far too numerous, of mind shipwrecked on the rocks of religious fatalism."

OBITUARY.

July 22, at Leicester, MARIANNE, the beloved wife of Mr. C. HOLLINS.

July 23, MARY, wife of Mr. Richard WAINWRIGHT, of Blaxton Grange, near Doncaster.

July 24, aged 49, SELINA, widow of Captain TUCKER, formerly of Poole, and daughter of the late Rev. Abraham Bennett, of Manchester.

Aug. 28, at Southport, aged 75 years, MARGARET, third daughter of the late Rev. Hezekiah KIRKPATRICK, Unitarian minister of Park-Lane chapel, near Wigan.

Sept. 1, at her residence, High Bank,

Gorton, in Lancashire, aged 74 years, Miss GRIMSHAW.

Sept. 2, at Long Sutton, in the 69th year of her age, after a long and severe illness, REBECCA, the wife of Rev. John COOPER, minister of Lutton and Fleet.

Sept. 5, at his residence, King Edward's Road, South Hackney, aged 70 years, Rev. F. A. COX, D.D., LL.D., the pastor of the Baptist church at Hackney, over whom he had presided for more than 42 years.

Sept. 8, at Malton, Yorkshire, in the sixty-third year of his age, Mr. GEORGE KINGSTON.

Sept. 19, in her 69th year, SARAH, widow of the late Mr. Edward NEEDHAM, of Birmingham.

Sept. 20, at Moreton-Hampstead, in the 38th year of his age, Mr. WM. WHITE, solicitor, after a severe and lingering illness. He held a useful and honourable station in society, lived respected and esteemed, and died much lamented by a large circle of friends and relatives. His loss is, and will be, much felt by many. A numerous train of mourners, some from a considerable distance, as a token of respect to his memory, followed his remains to their last resting-place, deeply impressed with the solemnity of the event which had brought them together.

Sept. 23, at Paris, J. JONES, Esq., of Newcastle, Staffordshire, civil engineer, and chief agent to T. Brassey, Esq., contractor of the Caen and Cherbourg Railway.

Oct. 2, in the seventh year of his age, JOSEPH ALLEN, eldest son of Joseph RIDGE, Esq., M.D., 39, Dorset Square, London.

Oct. 5, at the house of Mr. William Ashton, Heaton Norris, aged 23, FANNY, last surviving daughter of the late Mr. George ASHTON, of Portwood, Stockport.

Oct. 10, at Prestwich, Lancashire, at the house of her son, Mrs. O'DWYER, of Wakefield, aged 66 years.

Oct. 10, at Cheltenham, after a long and trying illness, Mrs. H. E. FURBER.

Oct. 12, in her 51st year, MARTHA, wife of James GARFIRTH, Esq., of Dukinfield.

Oct. 14, aged 25 years, MARIANNE, wife of Edward RIGBY, Esq., M.D., of Berkeley Square, London.

Oct. 20, at Hyde, HANNAH, wife of Mr. Alfred BENNETT, and sister of the Rev. Franklin Howorth, of Bury. Gentleness, purity and kindness, distinguished her through life, and the sufferings of a long decline were borne with unwavering patience and faith.

Oct. 21, aged 86, Mr. SAMUEL HART, of Hackney, formerly of Spitalfields. A friend has suggested that the Christian Reformer need not close this month's Obituary without a line or two in memory of one of the best Christians, and one of

the oldest and best of Unitarians, over whom the grave has just closed. On an able descendant, I hope, will devolve the task of sketching the chief particulars of the life of this good man, one of the last links which connect the age of *Priestley* with our own. He was a hearer and a catechumen of that great man; for though born at Hatherleigh, in Devonshire, and apprenticed in Exeter, he could afterwards sit at the feet of Priestley in Hackney, who made it part of his office, as it should ever be that of ministers, to instruct the young in the elementary principles of theological literature and true piety. His subsequent life was in perfect harmony with such early privileges. He greatly enjoyed the services of Belsham and Aspland in after years. Often it has been the delight of the writer to learn of this sensible man, and to trace in him and his descendants the inestimable advantage of early religious training. Farewell, aged and consistent disciple of Jesus! Thou hast verified, both as a religionist and a citizen, the apostolic words, "through evil and good report"!

B. M.

Oct. 22, at his residence, Gatley Hill, near Cheadle, Cheshire, in his 68th year, JOHN ALCOCK, Esq. He was descended from a family who have for several generations belonged to the English Presbyterian denomination, and many of whose members have adorned it by their virtues. He was for many years connected with a branch of the Manchester trade, but had retired from business some time before his death. His intellectual powers, which were solid rather than brilliant, had been assiduously cultivated; and the result was a large store of information, and a judgment remarkably well balanced and true. His modesty was so habitual, that beyond the circle of his intimate friends and the members of his family, few were aware of the value which belonged to his carefully-formed conclusions. A more honourable man never lived. He made every duty a matter of conscience, and his conscience was enlightened by a sound understanding and by enlarged views of religion. His temper was without a flaw, and it may be said with confidence he never made an enemy nor lost a friend. In Unitarianism he found a system of faith which was congenial to the clearness of his understanding, his sense of rectitude, and his benevolence of heart. He was a liberal and judicious supporter of the institutions of his religious denomination. For many years he sat on the Committee of Manchester New College. For a much longer

period he was connected with the Unitarian congregation at Stockport, and took an active part in erecting the new Unitarian church in that town. In politics he was equally moderate and firm, acting throughout life with the Whig party, and conciliating by his consistency the respect of numerous political opponents who were his neighbours. He discharged with fidelity the various parochial and other offices which are incidental to the owners of landed property. If the wishes of those friends and neighbours who best knew his worth had been acted upon, he would have found on the magisterial bench a field for exercising his judgment and practical skill; but diffidence on his own part, and political apathy in others, prevented in this matter the required steps for success. The greater part of his life was passed at Gatley Hill, a patrimonial estate, where he found occupation and amusement in a beautiful garden and greenhouse. He married Elizabeth, daughter of the late Randal Hibbert, Esq., of Godley, and she and a family of four sons and two daughters now lament his loss. His house was ever open to the rites of a simple but not inelegant hospitality. After

an intimacy of nearly a quarter of a century, the writer of this brief tribute of respect can truly say, that the late Mr. Alcock appeared to him to be in a remarkable manner free from those infirmities and imperfections that sometimes detract from the worth of even good men. In every relation of life he was circumspect and faithful, and he never allowed any quality, however useful or pleasing, to grow out of its rightful proportion. The symmetry of his character was remarkable. As his habits and feelings were the fruit of deliberately-formed principles, and as his religious principles were always uppermost in his mind, it is only right that Unitarian Christianity should be regarded as the good tree which produced the good fruit of his character. His friends fondly hoped that a life so gentle, pure and eminently happy as his certainly was, would be continued beyond the three-score years and ten which are the ordinary limits of human strength; but about a year ago there began to be an evident decline of vital power, and under the debilitating effects of organic disease, which latterly made rapid advances, he sank exhausted into his last peaceful slumber.

MARRIAGES.

July 19, at the Upper chapel, Sheffield, by Rev. Thomas Hincks, Mr. HENRY DALTON to Miss ELIZABETH APPELEYARD.

Aug. 2, at Mill-Hill chapel, Leeds, by Rev. S. Alfred Steinthal, of Bridgewater, JULIUS WOLFFSOHN, Esq., of Bradford, to ELIZA MARGARET, third daughter of Bradley CLAY, Esq., of Headingley, near Leeds.

Aug. 8, at the Old chapel, Dukinfield, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., Mr. DAVID WALKER to Miss SARAH BROADBENT, both of Dukinfield.

Aug. 27, at Upper Brook-Street chapel, by Rev. J. J. Taylor, Mr. J. T. SINGLETON to MARIA COE, youngest daughter of the late Mr. Joshua GORING, of Manchester.

Aug. 29, at Bank-Street chapel, Bolton, by Rev. F. Baker, M.A., Mr. THOMAS ODDY to JOANNA, daughter of Mr. Thomas ROTHWELL, all of Horwich.

Sept. 21, at the Unitarian church, Newhall Hill, Birmingham, by Rev. Samuel Bache, Mr. THOMAS PRIME, Jun., of Handsworth, to ELIZABETH, elder daughter of John GREEN, Esq., of Edgbaston.

Sept. 28, at the Old chapel, Dukinfield, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., Mr. HENRY DAVIES to Miss ANN ARRANDALE, both of Dukinfield.

Sept. 28, at the Presbyterian chapel, Bury, Lancashire, by Rev. John Cropper, of Stand, Mr. LEONARD WILDE, machinist, to Miss ELLEN CHORLTON, of Birkenhead.

Oct. 5, at the Unitarian chapel, Shepton Mallet, by Rev. J. B. Bristowe, Mr. JOSEPH DICKENS to Mrs. E. DALLIMORE, both of that town.

Oct. 5, at Hope-Street church, Liverpool, by Rev. J. H. Thom, LEYSON, only son of Israel H. LEWIS, Esq., of East Farleigh, Kent, to ISABELLA, daughter of Rev. James MARTINEAU, of Liverpool.

Oct. 12, at Renshaw-Street chapel, Liverpool, by Rev. J. H. Thom, GEORGE JEVONS, Esq., of Birkenhead, to ELIZABETH, daughter of the late John D. THORNELY, Esq., of Liverpool.

Oct. 13, at the Presbyterian chapel, Gainsborough, by Rev. John Shannon, of Hull, Mr. JAMES SAMUELSON, merchant, of Hull, to FANNY, only daughter of Rev. William WORSLEY, Morton, near Gainsborough.

Oct. 23, at the Old chapel, Dukinfield, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., Mr. WILLIAM LUDLAM, of Mottram, to Miss HANNAH ADAMSON, of Hollingworth.